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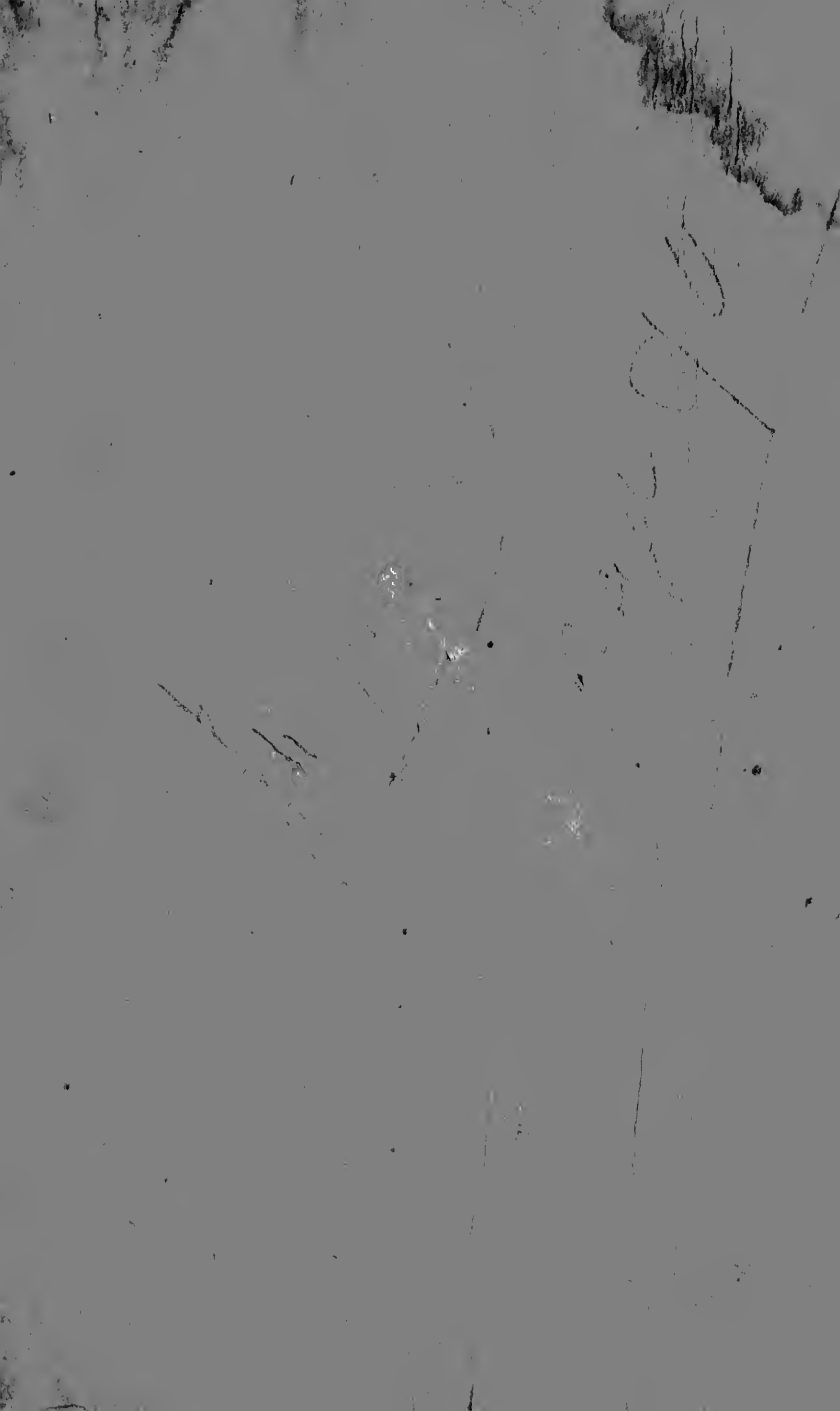
Presented by Mr. Samuel Agnew of Philadelphia, Pa.

Agnew Coll. on Baptism, No. 1733

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C. J.



A
L E T T E R
T O T H E

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL PÆDOBAPTIST CHURCH, AT
RUTLAND IN VERMONT :

TO WHICH IS ADDED;

A COLLECTION OF
OBSERVATIONS, HYMNS, LETTERS, &c.

TAKEN FROM THE WORKS OF MR. NATHANIEL EMMONS,
MR. JOHN WESLEY, AND OTHERS.

IN THIS COLLECTION MAY BE SEEN, DR. ROBBINS'S AC-
COUNT OF A LATE REVIVAL OF RELIGION AT PLY-
MOUTH, IN MASSACHUSETTS.

BY PETER PHILANTHROPOS ROOTS.

*CRISPUS the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all
his house : and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were bap-
tized.*

ACTS xviii. 8.

His disciples——

——To them shall leave in charge

To teach all nations what of him they learn'd,

And his salvation ; them who shall believe

Baptizing in the profluent stream——

MILTON, P. L. B. xii.

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THEOLOGICAL
SEM.
P R E F A C E.

HAD I not been a candidate for the gospel ministry ; perhaps, by the help of what I once thought probable arguments, I might have kept myself easy in the traditional practice of infant baptism. But I expected before long, if I should live, to be ordained, and called upon myself to baptize : and I felt it a very solemn thing to say, *I perform any act whatever in the name of the Trinity :—in the name of the Great God of heaven and earth.* I was fully sensible that whatever was to be done *in the name of the Trinity*, could not be a totally indifferent, nor even a light thing.

I KNEW, if infant baptism were warranted by Christ's commission to his apostles and their successors, or any where else in the word of God, it must be wrong for christian ministers to neglect it—or so much to neglect attending to the subject, as not to see for themselves, and be able to show their hearers some clear scriptural command, (or at least permission) for the practice. But if there be nothing in the sacred volume to justify the baptizing of those, who do not appear to be taught, or *discipled*, that is, brought to love Christ supremely* ; then I felt that it must be awfully wicked and impious for any one to say respecting an infant (or any other person) who gives no evidence of being taught, or of loving Christ, "I baptize this person in in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Good men may have done it ignorantly : but if there be no scripture warrant for the practice, can any good man, except it be ignorantly,

(or because he erroneously believes it has scripture support) allow himself to baptize infants? Can any real christian be prevailingly convinced, that the bible does not justify infant baptism—or can he be so far convinced as repeatedly to say, to be candid and honest he is three quarters a baptist; and yet declare from time to time in the face of a whole congregation, that *he baptizes infants in the name of the Trinity*? May I not further ask, Will not every person who has a suitable regard for the name of the great Jehovah, if he be only doubtful about the matter, much rather be excused, than to baptize them?

A SENSE of the solemn transaction to be performed, when any one is baptized, led me to study and study again, to find good evidence in support of infant baptism: and the result of my studies you may see in the following pages.

I KNOW it may appear strange, if not ridiculous, to some, that, after so many able writers, I should undertake to publish any thing respecting this subject. But many of my old acquaintance, and others, are frequently asking me, how in the world I became a baptist! And I choose rather to give them my reasons in print, than always to be giving them by word of mouth.

SOME say to me, “you believe, that your father and many others, who have baptized infants, were pious, good men—and you hope that you had religion some years before you became a baptist, why was it necessary for you to alter your sentiments at all?” Answer, Pious men, and those too who are the most knowing as to many things, may, through ignorance, neglect some branches of their duty; but for us to allow ourselves in the neglect of any thing Christ has commanded, after we are brought to know what is required, shows the want of love to the dear Redeemer.

OTHERS say to me “you have changed your religion.” But this is not true. A man’s altering some of his ideas, if he still hold to the same fundamental truths, which he held to before, cannot with any pro-

priety be called a change of his religion. I am no pagan nor papist. I now believe the same important truths, respecting the state of man by nature—the necessity of regeneration—the way of life and salvation by Christ alone—the necessity of holiness of heart and life as a prerequisite for heaven, which I believed before. I have the same idea, that none ought to be admitted as members of a visible gospel church, except those, who appear to be *lively stones*, or true saints, as my father had before me*, and the same which I had before I was a baptist : although he and I too (for a time) both held to infant baptism, which I now think inconsistent with this article of primitive christianity.

THE substance of this letter, except the quotations from other authors, was written at Boston in the month of June, 1792 ; soon after I was baptized : and it was sent to the church at Rutland in Vermont, which church I joined under the pastoral care of my own father some years before his death.

THOSE who take pains to peruse this performance, (though they should find but little or nothing new) will at least see in what light old arguments presented themselves to my view : and perhaps some persons, who have hitherto wholly neglected the subject, may, for the sake of reading a new book, be brought to attend to *old* scriptural arguments.

I SOMEWHAT expect not to be treated with total neglect : I think Mr. A. H. a worthy pædobaptist minister told me, should I publish, if no one else answered me, he would : and possibly some may be excited to preach on the subject. I really wish those ministers, who practise infant baptism, would preach on it much oftener than they do. They must view it as a part of practical religion, and if it be according to the scriptures, it will bear the light as well from the pulpit as from the press : but many congregations rarely, if ever

* See a printed sermon preached by *Bennajah Roots*, A. M. at the constitution of a church at Rutland, from 1. Peter, II. 5. *Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.*

hear their ministers offer to give a reason in public, why infants ought to be baptized. Would they but frequently handle the subject, this would excite attention to it, and they would undoubtedly convince some of their hearers, if not themselves, that the practice is totally destitute of scriptural support.

I AM personally acquainted with *Mr. Samuel Mills*, a pious, learned gentleman, who had for many years been a presbyterian minister in the state of New-York; but being led to preach a number of sermons in favour of infant baptism, he was brought to attend very closely to the arguments commonly used in its defence; but the more he attended to them, the more he felt them give way; and at length, after a long struggle to support the cause, he perceived it had no scriptural foundation: therefore he was cheerfully baptized by elder *Enoch Ferriss*, as *the answer of a good conscience*: and he is now a baptist preacher.

BEFORE I was baptized, but when I was exercised in mind about the matter, it was frequently my petition at the throne of grace, that I might be kept from embracing error; but if I were in an error, that I might be enlightened: I think I can still pray in the same manner, both for myself and others.

P. PH. R.



PROPERTY OF
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REC. APR 1881
THEOLOGICAL
SEM. N.Y.

A LETTER,

To the first CONGREGATIONAL PÆDOBAPTIST Church,
at Rutland in the State of Vermont.*

DEAR friends, for whom I have a tender regard, and whom I view in general as real friends to religion: May you “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ:” and never “fall from your own steadfastness,” as to those *truths*, which you now embrace: but if in any thing you be in an error, may you be enlightened.

HOWEVER disagreeable the thought of dissenting from you, and the greater part of my present connections, and Christian acquaintance; yet after strict examination, I have been obliged, from a conscientious regard to duty, to renounce my former profession as to the propriety of infant baptism: and propose in what follows to make known to you my views and feelings as to this subject.

IN that glorious time, never to be forgotten, December 1783, when it pleased Almighty God, in a remarkable manner, to revive religion at Rutland; and to manifest his power and grace in the conviction, and as we trust, in the real conversion of sinners, I was exci-

* Pædobaptists are those, who hold the doctrine of infant baptism.

ted to attend to religion in such a sense as I had never done before. I had new views of divine things. The bible (which now appeared to be a new book,) became my companion. I had been taught from a child, that, "the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, are the only rule to direct us how we may glorify God, and enjoy him;" and now I applied myself to the study of them, especially of the New Testament, with great delight.

AMONG other things I observed, that Christ sent forth his ministers "to teach all nations, baptizing them*:" and that many "hearing *believed*, and were baptized: and that this was so far from being the baptism of the Holy Ghost, that persons having received the Holy Ghost was given as a reason why they should be baptized with water†." But I found nothing so express in favour of infant baptism as I desired. I requested my honoured father, who had baptized many infants, to show me what foundation the scriptures afford us for this practice.

AND about this time I read a pamphlet, published by Mr. Israel Holly, in favour of infant baptism. I likewise found that the apostle said of some children, "but now are they holy†." By this I concluded he must mean they had a right to baptism, the very thing which I desired to prove. On the whole my mind became so easy, that, on the sixth of June 1784, I united with you (that is, with the pædobaptist church at Rutland.)

IN September following I began to prepare for college; and when at college my mind was again exercised about this matter. I conversed with Mr. Smith, one of the Tutors, and professor of languages on the subject; he said he would preach on it, and accordingly he did; and if I mistake not, observed in the close of his Sermon, that enough had been said to satisfy every unprejudiced mind." To which I replied, to myself,

* Mat. 28. 19. † Acts, 10. 47. ‡ 1 Cor. 7. 14.

“then my mind is prejudiced.” For tho’ I was prevailingly on his side of the question, yet I was not satisfied.

AFTER this I heard Mr. Ripley, professor of divinity at Dartmouth College, on the same subject : he handled it with great ingenuity and candour.

I ALSO read with attention a pamphlet written by Mr. *Timothy Allen*, and another by Mr. *Elisba Fish*, with an appendix, taken from the Rev. David Bostwick : And after I graduated, I read Mr. *Joseph Lathrop* of West-Springfield, with an appendix by Mr. *Nathan Perkins*. And what I found asserted as to the antiquity of infant-baptism, gave me much ease : and I rather concluded, tho’ I found no plain instance recorded in the bible, that it must have been the practice of the apostles. I supposed more could be said for, than against it : and at times I thought the arguments in support of it, were quite sufficient, and conclusive.

IN June 1791, I went to Nobletown, one part of Hillsdale, in the state of New-York : and during my residence in that place, which was ten or eleven months, my old doubts, about the propriety of infant baptism, were raised again. And after a considerable time, I ventured to do, as I had never done before, viz. to consider what real weight there was in the arguments on each side of the question : and now indeed the fabric, which I had taken so much pains to build, began to crumble to the dust.

I HAD gone along with the current of the times and said,

“THE church is really the same under the present as under the former dispensation ; for some of the branches were broken off and the wild olive tree was grafted in upon the old stalk, amongst the remaining branches of the good olive tree ; therefore as children were formerly included they must be now. Baptism comes in the room of circumcision ; therefore as God’s people of old were required to circumcise their children,

we must baptize ours. 'There was once a positive command to put the mark of God's people on children, therefore we must have a positive command not to baptize them before we may omit it.'

BUT when I was made willing to examine this reasoning, I readily perceived, (though the gospel was preached to Abraham, and the spiritual church is really the same under every dispensation) that the polity, or external rites and ordinances of the gospel church, are very different from those of the Jewish, in which their civil, and religious institutions were blended together. It has been commonly supposed, that the children of the Jews were born members of their church : but the members of the gospel church are those "which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man ; but of God*." They are those, who, at least by profession, are "created in Christ Jesus unto good work†." They all if they be not false professors, are as lively stones in this building. Says an apostle, "ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ‡." Those who *stand by faith* are the only persons, who have a just right to the gospel church, and those who *appear* to be true believers, are the only persons, whom we ought to receive and view as visible members ; and when the life of any one, who has professed, and appeared to believe in Jesus Christ, makes it manifest he does not stand by faith, he ought to be cut off. An inspired writer declares, "for as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ§." So, that to be consistent and baptize infants, we must suppose them regenerated in or before baptism. But how shall we judge who are, and who are not the subjects of this change, unless they be persons capable of exhibiting some evidence in their lives ?

THAT baptism is regeneration, or at least, that it takes

* John, 1. 13 † Eph. 2. 10. ‡ Peter, 2. 5. § Gal. 3. 2. 7.

place in *baptism*, appears, from the best information I can obtain, to have been the idea of those, who first began the practice of baptizing infants. Accordingly the most ancient authors, who speak of infant baptism call it *regeneration*.

THEY seem to have fallen into this error by understanding John 3. 5. "Born of water," in a literal sense. By a similar mistake the church of Rome were led to embrace the erroneous doctrine of transubstantiation, and to bring infants to the communion. For they supposed, unless their children were baptized, which they understood of being "born of water," and unless they partook of the bread and wine in the sacrament, which they understood of *eating the flesh of the son of man, and drinking his blood*†, that they could not be saved. Accordingly by quotations from ancient history we have instances of infant communion as early as any of infant baptism. And indeed the arguments, which are generally brought to prove the one, do quite as much toward proving the other.

BUT not to digress, "If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise†." That is, if ye be united to Christ by faith, then are ye Abraham's spiritual seed, and interested in the spiritual blessings, (not indeed in the land of Canaan, and in those temporal privileges, which belonged to his natural seed, whether they were pious like him or not, but in what is infinitely better) even in the spiritual blessings contained in the covenant made with Abraham. "Therefore," says the apostle, "it is of faith that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be *sure to all the seed*," not to all Abraham's natural seed, nor to all the natural seed of believers, (who would dare to say this?) but to all Abraham's spiritual seed, whatever their descent may have been, even to all nations, as the apostle further observes, "not to that only which is of the law, but to that also, which

is of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all."

I CAN here adopt the words of Mr. Cyprian Strong in his *inquiry*, &c. which was written by this worthy pædobaptist minister professedly in favour of infant baptism.

"Is it not evident, says he, that the children of believers, after the flesh, were not considered as the children of God and interested in the promises, which were made to Abraham? Let us attend to the account, which the apostle Paul gives us of this matter, Rom. ix. 6—8. His words are these "*For they are not all Israel which are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but in Isaac shall thy seed be called.*" The apostle then explains himself thus. *That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.*" It is observable, the apostle *contrasts* the children of the *flesh* to the children of the *promise*; and denies, that the former are reckoned for the seed, while he confines the seed to the latter. By the *children of the flesh* the apostle, doubtless, meant the *natural* offspring of Abraham and other believers. By the *children of the promise*, he evidently meant to *distinguish* those, who had an *interest* in the *promises* made to Abraham. That the children of the flesh are not, as such, interested in the promises or covenant, he illustrates by an example. There was *Jacob* and *Esau*, both of them the sons of *Isaac*; yet one was chosen and the other rejected; although they had the same claims, as being the children of a believing parent; and *one* in distinction from the *other* had not *forfeited* the blessings of the covenant: for they were chosen and rejected, before they had "done either good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election might stand, &c." By this it appears, that God did not consider himself as being under any covenant obligations, even to the children of his servant *Isaac*; and he dealt with them, as having a *sovereign* right, to do with them as seemed good in his sight. The instance

of *Isaac* and *Ishmael*, who were the children of Abraham, and yet, one was counted for the seed while the other was cast out, is also an example, which teaches us, that the children of believers after the flesh, are not considered as being interested in the covenant."

AND again, he says, "I would further attempt to show, in what sense we are to understand the term *seed* in the promise. In order to which, I would observe, that although the term *seed* in the promise, was restricted to *Isaac* in distinction from *Ishmael*, yet it comprehended *Isaac's seed*, in the same sense that it did the *seed* of *Abraham*; as appears from Gen. xvii. 19. It is of importance to observe further, that the promise made to *Isaac* and his *seed* was made to him, as a *type* of Jesus Christ, and of those who were given to him in the covenant of redemption; and so the term *seed* ultimately pointed at Jesus Christ, and those who were given him by the Father; and comprehends all *true* believers, in every age of the world. Thus it is explained, by the apostle Paul, Gal. iii. 16. "*Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith, not and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ.*" The apostle expressly teaches us, that although *Isaac* was mentioned as the *seed*, yet he was respected as a *type* and *representative* of Jesus Christ; and that the term ultimately and in the fullest sense respected Christ Jesus.

"FARTHERMORE, it is necessary to observe, that in Christ Jesus, the *seed* ultimately respected in the promise, was comprehended, *all* that were given to Christ, in the covenant of redemption; or *all* that *believe*, in every age of the world. That the term *seed* is applicable to Christ Jesus, in his mediatorial capacity, and comprehends *all* that are given to him is evident, from what the apostle Paul further says, in the before cited Gal. iii. After the apostle had said, that Christ Jesus was the *seed* referred to in the promise, he adds; v. 26 and onward, "*ye are all the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus; there is neither Jew nor Greek, &c. for*

ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's (i. e. believers) *then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.* It is evident, from these words, that the apostle considered, all that believe, in every age of the world, as being comprehended *in Christ*, as the seed. Hence, in v. 9. of the same chapter, the apostle says, "*they which be of faith*" (let them be who they will) "*are blessed with faithful Abraham.*"

AND the apostle Peter encourages his hearers to repent and be baptized from the consideration; that the blessings of the gospel extend to all of every age and nation, who cordially embrace the truth. His words are, "repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children," [not to your infants only, but to your children of whatever age, whether ten, twenty, forty, or any other age,] "and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call*." Here indeed it is limited to *as many as the Lord our God shall call*.

MR. C. STRONG brings this text as an objection to what he had proved, viz. "that no covenant relation doth exist, between God and children, on account of their being the children of covenant or believing parents."

Now as I think his answer is according to truth, I shall give you both the objection and answer, in his own words.

"OBJECTION. It is said, Acts ii. 39, "*The promise is unto you, and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call;*" which words contain an express affirmation, that the promise is unto *children*, as well as unto *parents*: and so are directly opposed to the sentiment advanced, in the preceding section.

"ANSWER. The whole strength of the objection formed on this passage, depends upon the truth of the

* Acts, 2. 38, 39.

two following propositions ; namely, that the promise spoken of in the text, is the *same* promise which was made to Abraham ; and, that by *children* is meant, the *natural seed* of believers. I am not insensible, that such a sense and interpretation of the words has very generally been entertained : and, in that view of them, they have been considered, as a capital proof of the doctrine of infant-baptism. But, if the words are to be considered, as holding forth an interest in and title to the covenant of grace, respecting the *natural seed* of believing parents, we must unavoidably conclude, that the interest and title of such children, to the blessings of the covenant of grace, is as *extensive* and *absolute* as that of believing parents : and, that their salvation is as certain as the salvation of parents ; for their interest in the covenant or promise, is expressed in the same terms. As much is affirmed concerning *children* as *parents*. But, this cannot be admitted, as being in reality the case. We must, therefore, conclude, that there is some mistake implied in the objection, relative to the meaning of the objected text.—And, I apprehend, that a little attention to the words, will convince an unprejudiced mind, that they have no respect to the promise made to Abraham ; but that they solely respect a *prophecy* or *prediction*, of the prophet Joel, concerning the effusion of the Holy Spirit, in the *last days* ; or under the gospel dispensation. In the beginning of the chapter, which contains the words under consideration, there is an account, of a very extraordinary operation of the Holy Ghost, on the minds of the multitude, who were assembled together, “in one place,” on the day of pentecost. Although the minds of the most were amazed and astonished, yet some mocked and derided the apostles, as though they were “full of new wine.” Peter stands up and addresses them, in these words (. 16) “*This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel.*” He then proceeds to rehearse the prediction at large, v. 17. “*And it shall come*

to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, &c. that is, upon Jews and Gentiles. After he had made it evident, that what then took place was the fulfilment of a prophecy, which respected the gospel day, or the time of the Messiah, he proceeds to show, that *that* day was in fact come ;— that Christ was crucified and risen as was foretold by David, in the 16 Psalm. From all which Peter makes this inference, v. 33 : that Christ being raised and exalted, and having received the promise of the Holy Ghost, *He hath shed forth this which ye now see.*” It was evident, from comparing the promise of the Holy Ghost, in the last days, made by the prophet Joel, with what then took place, that the Messiah had come, and that the gospel day was introduced. What the apostle advanced had its effect, and produced full conviction, in the minds of many of his hearers—They “*were pricked in their heart,*” and enquired, “*Men and brethren, what shall we do ?*” Peter replies, “*Repent, and be baptized; every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins ; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost ; for the promise is unto you and to your children, &c.*” What promise must we suppose the apostle had in view ? It must be the promise of the Holy Ghost, which was made by the prophet Joel ; for no other promise had been mentioned, in the whole preceding discourse : and this promise is here mentioned, as a reason, why such as should repent and be baptized might expect to receive the Holy Ghost ; as Peter, in the words preceding, had declared they should.

It is to be remarked, that the *promise*, so called, was not a *covenant*, but a *prediction* or *declaration* of what was to take place, under a particular dispensation ; or “*in the last days.*” They to whom the apostle, was addressing himself, were subjects on whom, the *prophecy* or *prediction* was fulfilling. The apostle, therefore, calls upon them, to repent and be baptized ; and thereby acknowledge and submit to the christian dispensa-

tion, which they then saw, with such striking evidence, was introduced. The apostle when he said, "*the promise is to you,*" &c. was not teaching them any covenant obligation, which God was under, either to *them* or their *children* ; but, that the prediction, as to the fulfilment of it, respected them and future generations : And, it being so evident, that the christian dispensation was introduced, he calls upon them to submit to it, by being baptised. The prophet Joel, applied the promise or prediction to "*the last days,*"—the gospel day : and the apostle Peter further explains it, by saying, that the fulfilment of it was not confined to those, who then heard him speak ; but it was extended to their children, and their childrens children, even to the last generations.

"It hence appears, that it would be misapplying the promise mentioned, in the passage under consideration, to consider it, as being the promise which was made to Abraham : and a greater misapplication and abuse of it, to infer from it, that *children* are interested in the covenant of grace, because their parents are ; for the promise appears to have no reference to the Abrahamic covenant ; but is restricted to a particular *prophecy* and *prediction*. Indeed, there is nothing of the nature of a covenant, contained in the promise under consideration ; it is clearly a prediction of what should come to pass, in the last days ; and when the apostle told his hearers, that the promise, was to them, &c. he meant no more, than that the promise, as to the accomplishment of it, respected them,—their children and succeeding generations, both Jews and Gentiles.

"It appears evident, therefore, that the passage under consideration cannot be considered, as containing any objection to what has been advanced ; for it hath no respect to the Abrahamic covenant, or covenant of grace, nor to the *natural seed* of believers as such." (See Mr. Strong's Enquiry, p. 37--40.)

ON the whole, I could make out nothing in favour of infant-baptism from the sameness of the church.

BUT it is said, "Baptism comes in the room of circumcision, and therefore as there was once a positive command to circumcise children, we must not omit to baptize ours, unless it be expressly forbidden: and where is it forbidden?" And to make the matter plain, it has been said, "Should president Washington require all his friends to wear a red rose, (answering to circumcision) and to see that their children wore the same; but afterwards should he say, my friends, instead of the red rose, it is my will that you henceforward wear a white one (answering to baptism) would they not all put the white rose on their children, tho' he should say nothing about them."

BUT let me state the case more accurately. Should president Washington require all his male friends to wear a red rose, and to see that their *male* infants only wore the same; but at the same time declare, that the *females* in those families, where the rose was worn, should be included with the males, and viewed as belonging to his peculiar people *without this external badge*: But should he afterwards command his friends to wear a white rose instead of the red one, would they not all put the white rose on their males *only*, and suppose their females to be still included without this badge? Surely they would.

BUT when I came to examine this matter, I found it no where said, *instead* of circumcising, now baptize. But on the contrary, I found, (whatever similarity may be traced between circumcision and baptism, the passover and the Lord's supper,) that the gospel ordinances are not to be considered as coming in the room of those ancient rites. It is very plain from the twelfth of Exodus, that all the Israelites ate of the passover. But those only are to partake of the Lord's supper, who are capable of examining themselves, and of eating and drinking understandingly; lest they should eat

and drink unworthily, “not discerning the Lord’s body*.”

AND those only are to be baptized, who are capable of submitting to this ordinance in the way of obedience. Baptism is “not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God.” It “doth now save us—by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,” in no other way, only as by it, we personally make a *conscientious* profession of our faith in Christ†. But,

SHOULD it be granted that baptism, in any sense, comes in the room of circumcision, still it would make nothing for the common practice: because there is an evident alteration as to the subjects, to whom it is to be applied. Only males were circumcised, but all are to be baptized on a *profession of their faith, both men and women*. It was not lawful to circumcise any until they were ceremonially clean, on the eighth day; but what was barely ceremonial is now done away, and was then only typical of spiritual cleanliness. And as we are now to regard only what is spiritual, it is no more lawful for us to baptize those, who exhibit no evidence of being *washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God‡*; than it was lawful for them to circumcise before the eighth day.

AND here I cannot but observe, how they, who say that baptism comes in the room of circumcision, by sometimes baptizing before the eighth day, and often omitting it till afterwards, break the very command on which they build their whole scheme. “God said unto Abraham—he that is *eight days old shall be circumcised* among you every man child in your generations; he that is born in the house or bought with money of any stranger; which is not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money must needs be circumcised§.” Accordingly

* 1 Cor. 11. 17--34. † 1 Pet. 3. 21. ‡ 1 Cor. 6. 11. § Gen. 17. 12. 13.

Paul relates that he was “*circumcised the eighth day*†.” And we read respecting the circumcision of John the baptist. “And it came to pass, that on *the eighth day* they came to circumcise the child§.” And respecting our Saviour, it is written, “and when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child his name was called Jesus||.” The eighth day was appointed by God, and that day was punctually observed by his people. Though children were ever so sick and likely to die, they might not be circumcised until that time, and undoubtedly many of them died uncircumcised. Nor was it lawful whenever the eighth day came, to omit the circumcision of the child, on account of its being a week day, or the sabbath ; a rainy day, or a busy, hurrying time of year ; nor for the want of a priest at hand to perform the business ; nor for the want of fine, gay clothes for the child to be dressed in ; nor on any other account, except in case of absolute necessity, like that of the children of Israel, when journeying through the wilderness. The Lord blamed Moses for his neglect. If infants ought to be baptized because they were circumcised, then the scriptures afford us no excuse, neither for baptizing before, nor for neglecting their baptism after the eighth day ; any more than for neglecting it, until they are capable of acting for themselves.

BUT we are so far from granting that baptism comes in the room of circumcision, that, we think, altho’ circumcision was of the fathers, yet a little attention will be sufficient to show, that Christ’s apostles considered it as belonging to the Jewish ritual ; and therefore no more to be continued now, nor any thing else *in its stead*, than other things, which were peculiar to the former dispensation. St. Paul sets this matter in a clear light, “behold I Paul say unto you, if ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a

† Phil. 3. 5. § Luke 1. 59. || Luke 2. 21.

debtor to keep the whole law*," Plainly including circumcision with the rest of the ceremonial law.

AGAIN, it is evident that baptism came not in the room of circumcision, from the consideration that none but ministers have a right to baptize; but even women in old times might administer circumcision, though they were uncircumcised themselves. (see Ex. 4. 25.) But were any unbaptized, or even baptized woman to administer baptism, I believe no sensible protestant would view such administration to be valid.

HAD "the churches of Galatia" understood that baptism came in the room of circumcision, it is strange that they who had undoubtedly been baptized, should still be set for circumcision: though it is not to be wondered at, that, when circumcision was laid aside, and nothing placed in its stead, they should still contend for that ancient rite.

It is strange that the apostle, who said so much against the Judaizing Christians, never mentioned that baptism came in the room of circumcision, which, if true, would have been an argument the best calculated to ease their minds in laying aside that ancient practice. It is strange, that the first ministers of the gospel, who (according to the plan of some) had been administering baptism to infants, because it came in the room of circumcision; should notwithstanding, be so ignorant of what they had been about, as to find it necessary to call a council, to enquire whether they ought still to practise circumcision. And when we read the fifteenth of Acts, and attend to the consultation of the apostles about circumcision, it is indeed strange, that we find not so much as the least hint, that baptism comes in the room of it—*strange*, do I say? It is not at all strange; for they never viewed the matter in this light—such an idea was not known in the days of the apostles.

It is true there was once a positive command for circumcising *male*-children, on the eight day; and now

* Gal. 5. 2, 3.

we have positive declarations of scripture, which justify us in laying aside the practice. And unless we have a positive command for baptizing infants as well as believers, we have no right to baptize them: and where have we any such command? Or where is there a single example recorded? Or any solid foundation for such a practice, in the word of God?

In times past, I had frequently mentioned household baptism to establish myself and others in the belief of infant-baptism. I reasoned as follows, "It seems, said I, that the keeper of the prison was baptized, he and all his, straight-way in the same hour of the night, in which he himself believed*, And Lydia was baptized and her household†. And the household of Stephanas‡. Now said I, whether infants belonged to these households or not; we cannot think it probable that the whole of these families were convicted, and converted, so as to be baptized on *their own* profession of faith, and that too in the same hour in which the heads of the families believed and were baptized; therefore we must conclude, that the households mentioned in these places were baptized on the faith of their parents: and if so, then it is now the duty of believing parents to see that their children are baptized."

But when I came to examine these passages of scripture, my former reasoning from them appeared weak. I found no more evidence that the jailor had children, who were baptized on the account of his faith, than that he had a wife baptized on the same account; for if he had a wife, she was undoubtedly *his*, and belonged to his house, or family. I also found it expressly said of the jailor, and his, that "they (the apostles) spake unto him the word of the Lord and *to all that were in his house*. Therefore I concluded, whether he had infants, or not; infants were not included in the "all that were in his house:" for I did not think, that the apostles would have preached to those, who were not ca-

* Acts 16. 33. † Acts 16. 15. ‡ 1 Cor. 1. 16.

pable of understanding any thing of what was delivered. I likewise, found it affirmed of the jaylor, that he “rejoiced *believing in God with all his house.*” I know some have wished to understand the Greek, rendered in our translation *with all his house*, to mean something else. But all the Lexicons which I have had opportunity to examine, justify our translation, by rendering the word, *cum tota domo*: nor do those who find fault with the present translation, bring any passage where *panoiki* is differently translated. Had it been rendered, he *rejoiced* with all his house, this would have equally proved, that his house were believers; for none but believers do really rejoice in God. On examination I could find nothing in this passage to prove infant-baptism. The word of the Lord was spoken to them all, all believed; and were baptized.

I THEN attended to what is said of Lydia, “she was baptized and her household.” Here I found no more evidence, that she had children baptized on her faith, than that she had a husband baptized on the same account. For if she had a husband, I suppose, he must have been included in her household. And as she appears to have been a woman of a good character, even before this, one who “worshipped God,” it is most likely, if she had young children, she also had a husband. But finally it does not appear whether she had husband, or children, or whether her household consisted of servants only. Whoever they were, it seems by the last verse in the chapter, they were called “brethren,” and were such as the apostles “comforted.”

As to the household of Stephanas; it appears, that they were the friends of Christ, and “adicted themselves to the ministry of the saints.” Hear the apostles own words, “I beseech you, brethren; says he, (ye know *the house of Stephanas*, that it is the first fruits of Achaia, and that they have adicted themselves to the ministry of the saints†.”

Thus it appears that infants were not included in these households. But the baptists are not obliged to

prove a negative. In order to baptize infants on the baptism of households, it must be proved that infants were baptized in these households; but this never has, nor ever can be proved.

AFTER all my study, I could make out nothing from household-baptism, for the baptizing of infants. I found that there might be household faith, as well as household baptism. "Crispus the chief ruler of the synagogue BELIEVED ON THE LORD WITH ALL HIS HOUSE*." And when the noble man's servants had informed him at what hour the fever left his son; It is written, "so the father knew that it was at the same hour in the which Jesus said unto him, thy son liveth; and HIMSELF BELIEVED, AND HIS WHOLE HOUSE†." Furthermore it is evident that in scripture-language, the phrase *all his house* does not always include the infant child, even when it is certain there was one in the family: For we read "And the man Elkanah, and all his house, went up to offer unto the Lord the yearly sacrifice, and his vow. But Hannah went not up:" (here it is said *all his house went up*, there is no exception of any person but *Hannah*, and now comes the reason why she went not up, from which it is evident there was an infant child included in the phrase, *all his house*.) "for she said unto her husband, I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the Lord and there abide for ever. And Elkanah her husband said unto her, do what seemeth thee good, tarry until thou have weaned him, only the Lord establish his word: so the woman abode and gave her son suck until she weaned him." (1. Sam. i. 21, 22, 23.) This is perfectly agreeable to the common mode of expressing ourselves: we say such a family are *all* very kind and ever disposed to do good. We mean those of the family, who have come to years capable of manifesting their kindness, and disposition to do good.

* Acts 18. 8. † John 4. 53.

OUR pædobaptist brethren, in general, baptize only young children on their parents account; but households include those, who are seventeen, twenty and thirty years of age: therefore the argument from household baptism, if there be any weight in it, is as really against those who do not (when parents profess religion) baptize all the adult children in every such house, as against the baptists themselves.

I CONSIDERED also, that conversions took place in a more sudden, and extraordinary manner at the first commencement of the gospel-dispensation, than they ordinarily do in our day.

NOT being able to prove infant-baptism from circumcision, nor from the baptism of households; I reviewed the other arguments in favour of the common practice.

I HAD often quoted in support of infant baptism, "I Cor. vii. 14. for the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; *but now are they holy.*" But now examining the whole verse, I found that infant-baptism was no more proved by it, than the baptism of adults, that is, of children of any other age; (it is not said your infants, but your children,) and that the baptism of children was no more proved by it, than the baptism of the unbelieving husband, or wife.

BOTH our translation, and the original make the unbelieving parent to be sanctified, or to be holy, as really as the children; for in the original, to be sanctified and to be holy from the same Greek-root, and in our language the words are synonymous. And the holiness of the child being derived from the sanctification of the unbelieving parent, it cannot be superior to it, therefore, if that holiness give the child a right to baptism, the sanctification or holiness of the unbelieving parent must give him or her a right to the same.

BUT after all the apostle is not treating of baptism,

nor of a church-state ; but only of the lawfulness of a believer's continuing to live with his, or her, unbelieving companion, and of their having children together.

I also attended to Mark x. 14. "suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not : for of such is the kingdom of God : " which passage, with the parallel places in Matthew and Luke, is sometimes brought to support infant-baptism. On examination it appeared, that if Christ meant to say, that little children, or infants, belonged to " the kingdom of God ; " he must mean the invisible kingdom of grace, or the kingdom of glory ; for he immediately adds, " Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." But persons of all descriptions have entered into the visible church ; tho' believers only are fit members.

I HAVE been almost ready to smile sometimes, when I have heard people plead, that the gospel dispensation did not commence till after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and thence argue, that John's baptism was not Christian baptism ; and then within two minutes bring this text to prove that infants belong to the visible church under the present dispensation ; which dispensation, according to their own scheme, had not as yet taken place.

BUT observe Christ does not say *of them*, but "*of such* is the kingdom of God." The truth appears to be this, some persons having knowledge of Christ, and viewing him to be some eminent man ; if not the Messiah, desired him to bless their children, as Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph* ; and as it was usual for eminent persons to do ;—and that Christ was willing to receive them ; and took advantage of this opportunity to teach his disciples humility—to teach them that they must receive the kingdom of God as helpless creatures, or they should 'in no wise enter therein.' And not only this passage, taking the whole together, carries this

sense ; but this sense agrees with other texts of scripture.

WHEN the disciples discovered their pride, and ambitious desires about being “ the greatest in the kingdom of heaven,” “ Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, except ye be converted, and become *as little children*,” (not as the little children of believers only, but as little children indefinitely,) “ ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself *as this little child* the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive *one such little child* in my name, receiveth me. But whoso shall offend *one of these little ones*, which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea†.”

HERE Christ says, “ *one such little child*,” and “ one of these little ones, which *believe* in me :” yet we do not understand him to affirm that, that little child, whom he had set in the midst of them, was a believer. But we might with as much propriety, as to understand him in Mark x. 14. to assert that those children, who were brought to him, belonged to the kingdom of God.

THE visible, gospel-church is not composed of any who cannot make a profession of religion ; but of those who at least by profession, “ have put off the old man with his deeds ; and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him that created him. Where there is neither Greek, nor Jew, circumcision, nor uncircumcision, barbarian, scythian, bond nor free : but Christ is all, and in all‡.” (and Gal. 3. 27, 28 29.)

THE more I examined the arguments in favour of infant-baptism, the more and more, I felt myself to be without foundation.

† Mat. 18. 1--6. ‡ Col. 3. 9. 10, 11.

I TOOK notice, that where children were included, they were often mentioned in scripture. When Christ had miraculously fed a large number, it is observed, “ And they that had eaten were about five thousand men *besides women and children.*” And of those who had left Egypt, it is said, “ And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, *besides children.*” But I found it no where said that any certain number were baptized, and *besides children.*

AMONGST us when parents are converted, and make a profession of religion, there are often a number of children to be baptized, what a multitude of children, according to this practice, must have been baptized, when so many gentile parents were converted, yet there is no mention made of one. Strange indeed !

AND now I could not but observe, how plain the scriptures are, as to those things, which relate more immediately to *practice* ; so that good men, where there is nothing peculiar, in their situation to prejudice them against the truth, do, without hesitation fall in with their duty. But it is quite otherwise as to infant-baptism. Altho’ if it be a scriptural doctrine, it is a most *practical* matter, and a duty incumbent on every believing parent, to see that his children are baptized ; yet many (if not most serious people, who think much about the subject) even where they have every external circumstance to prejudice them in favour of the common practice, and against the contrary, cannot embrace it without great difficulty. But at length, by exerting themselves to find something in favour of it, and perhaps being assisted by their friends to some glosses, or seeming arguments, they rest in some measure easy—and this they do, without ever duly considering what can be said against the arguments with which they support themselves.

I KNOW this to have been the case with myself ; and that many of my pious friends, who are now settled

down in the practice of infant-baptism, were much exercised about the matter, before they could get themselves easy in their present situation.

ON the whole, as I had concluded to act like a protestant (not like a Roman-catholic) and to take the scriptures (not the pretended infallibility of men) for my rule of faith and practice, I perceived that my former scheme was without foundation; and that the seeming arguments, with which I had attempted to support it, would not bear to be scrutinized.

THUS without building on the baptism of *John*, nor as yet supposing the mode to be essential, whether by sprinkling, or immersion, I became an anti-pædobaptist in sentiment.

HERE it may be observed, I did not find it at all necessary to deny, in order to change my sentiments as to this particular, that the covenant made with Abraham was the covenant of grace: supposing it to be so indeed; yet St. Paul in his epistle to the Gallatians, especially in the third and fourth chapters, has fully shown, that those who are only "born after the flesh," are not to be viewed as in covenant, nor counted for the seed: saith he, "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise." "And they that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts."

AND now I began to feel that I was acting an inconsistent part; unbaptized and yet a preacher, appearing in the character of a candidate for the gospel ministry. And I began to disclose my views, and feelings to pædobaptist ministers, and candidates, though I said nothing to other people on the subject. And as I did not wish to be a baptist, unless the truth made me one, I was determined to look on both sides of the question; and accordingly I borrowed *Rice* in favour of infant-baptism, and Dr. Gill's reply to a pamphlet entitled, "*The baptism of infants a reasonable service, founded upon scripture, and undoubted apostolic tradition.*"

AND since that time I have read Hemenway in favour of infant-baptism, and Mr. Clark's answer to Dr. Gill ; and also some pamphlets published by Mr. Cleavland, Dr. Gill, and some others on both sides of the question.

AND it appears to me, that Dr. Gill has fully answered all that I have ever read, or heard brought to prove the baptism of infants from its antiquity. And I am surprized that some late authors should undertake to prove from *Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertulion, Origen, Cyprian with his council of sixty-six bishops, Austin and Palagious*, with some others, that infant-baptism is an apostolic tradition ; and at the same time, take no notice of Dr. Gill, who has fully answered them before they wrote*.

IN further examining the subject I was led to pay some attention to the mode, and soon found that the proper signification of the word *baptize*, is to dip, or wash by immersion ; nor is there the least evidence, that, when water baptism is intended, the word is ever once used in the New-Testiment, to signify any thing less than to dip, or put into water.

I KNOW we read in *Heb. ix. 10.* of *divers washings, or baptisms*, as it is in the original. The apostle is here speaking of Old-testament times, and by looking back we may easily see what those divers baptisms were. When a person was ceremonially unclean he was required to *wash his clothes and bathe himself in water.*† Here indeed was a baptism both of his clothes, and of himself : water was not sprinkled or poured on ; but they were *washed and bathed in water.* Again respecting unclean reptiles, it is written, “ And upon whatsoever any of them, when they are dead, doth fall, it shall be unclean ; whether it be any vessel of wood, or raiment, or skin, or sack, whatsoever vessel it be, wherein any work is done, *It must be put into water.*” Not sprinkled or have water put on to it ; but *It must be*

* See some extracts from Dr. Gill at the end of this letter.

† See this repeatedly commanded in the X.V. of Leviticus and elsewhere.

put into water†. No wonder therefore, that we read of divers baptisms. Again in the vii. Chap. of St. Mark, we find the same Greek word, which is used for baptism applied to the washing of hands, cups, pots, &c. It is evident that this was not a common, but a ceremonial washing when they had been to the markets and the like, and therefore it was undoubtedly performed by immersion: for to put into water, was the way, as you see by the passages above cited, to make things ceremonially clean by washing. *Dr. Harwood* in his edition of the Greek Testament, in a note on this chapter, says, “they plunged the arm up to the elbow. *Keyssers travels Vol. 1. p. 14. Edit. duodecimo.* Consult also, *Beaufobres posthumous remarks in loc.*” Therefore it may be said with great propriety that they baptized their hands. When people only wash their hands in an ordinary way, they commonly wet them all over, and that too by immersion.

BUT I believe the Greek word for baptizing is rarely, if ever used for the ordinary washing of the face, hands, or feet, (nor is it ever, unless they are dipped) but the word commonly used is *nipto*. As in *Mat. 6. 17. and wash thy face. John 9. 7. go wash in the pool, and 13. 5. and began to wash the disciples feet. 1. Tim. 5. 10. if she have washed the saints feet.* The washing of other foul, or dirty things to make them clean, is usually expressed by the Greek word, *louo*; as in *2. Pet. 2. 22. The sow that was washed,* to her wallowing in the mire. The mere act of sprinkling, or pouring is never called *washing* in the New-Testament.

BUT undoubtedly there are some words in the Greek language, which exactly answer to the English words, *pour, sprinkle, and dip*; and what are they? What is the Greek, which exactly answers to the English word,

† Lev. xl. 32.

pour ? Not *bapto*, nor its derivative *abaptizo*, but *cheo*, and its compounds, as a little attention to the Greek will plainly show. If I mistake not, the only places in our translation of the New Testament, where we find *pour*, *poured*, or *pouring*, are the following, viz. *Mat.* 26. 7, 12. *Mark* 14. 3. *Luke* 10. 34. *John* 2. 15 and 13. 5. *Acts* 10. 45. *Rev.* 14. 10. and 16. 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 10, 12, 17. and not in one of these places do we find a word, which has the least similarity, or relation to the word used for baptism.

AND now what is the Greek which exactly answers to the English word *sprinkle* ? Not *bapto* nor *baptizo* nor are these words, or either of them, ever once so translated in the New Testament. I think the following are the only places in our translation of that book, where *sprinkle* or *sprinkling*, are to be found, viz. *Heb.* 9. 13, 29. and 10. 22. and 11. 28. and 12. 24. and 1. *Peter*, 1. 3. and the original does fully prove, that *rantizo* is the Greek, which does most exactly answer to the English word *sprinkle* ; for it is the only word (in some of its branches) used in all these places ; except *Heb.* 11. 28. where the word used more properly signifies *pouring*, or rather *the pouring of one thing on another*. *Raino* the root of *rantizo*, is sometimes used for *sprinkling*.

BUT what is the Greek, which exactly answers to the English word *dip* ? Not *cheo* nor *rantizo* ; but certainly *bapto*, from which the word *baptize* is derived. This assertion, the original of every place, where we have in our translation *dip*, *dipped*, *dippeth*, or *dipt*, will fully justify. See *Mat.* 26. 23. *He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish.* *Mark*, 14. 20. *It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish.* *Luke* 16. 24. *that he may dip the tip of his finger in water.* *John* 13. 26. *I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop.* *Rev.* 19. 13, *vesture dipt in blood.* *Bapto* and *baptizo* are synonymous, the root is the very same ; and they are both used for dipping ;

just as *raino* and *rantizo* are both used for sprinkling.

I HOPE the candid reader will pardon the intrusion of this Greek. Our translation is so plain, there would have been no need of it, had not the practice and preaching of many, bewildered the minds of some, and led them to suppose that the Greek words for sprinkling, pouring, dipping and baptizing, were all one and the same.

It may be observed that the original is nearly retained in the word *baptize*; had the Greek been as nearly retained in the word for sprinkling, it would have been *rantize*, and now I do not believe, that *rantism* is *baptism*.

I WILL add, that Burkitt, and Pool, and other expositors of the paedobaptists, as well as the baptists, understand, Rom. VI. 4. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (and Col. 2. 12.) to allude to the ancient mode of baptizing, which, say they, was by immersion. And, if this was the ancient mode of baptizing, and there has been no new revelation of late, and no new law-giver since Christ, it must be the present mode. These passages prove the subjects to be adults; for they only are capable of making a profession of being dead to sin, and alive unto God: and the mode immersion, by which they profess their faith in a risen Saviour, and their conformity to him in his death and resurrection.

THERE are many passages of scripture, which show, that baptism is as really, and as much designed to represent the burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, (*who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification*) as that the Lord's supper is designed to represent the broken body, and the blood of Christ. The apostle Peter speaking of the salvation of Noah and his family in the ark, says "the like figure whereunto, even

baptism, doth also now save us"—“by the *resurrection of Jesus Christ*,” plainly showing that baptism has reference to the resurrection of Christ, and his resurrection includes that of his members at the last day. Noah and his family were not sprinkled, nor poured on; but they were like persons alive from the dead:—they emerged from the ruins of the old world.

LEA RIGHT understanding of baptism may assist us, perhaps, to understand 1 Cor. XV. 29. “Else what shall they do, which are *baptized for the dead*, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?” (The same word in the original, which is here translated *for* sometimes signifies, *concerning*, *respecting*, or *with reference* to any thing; as in Rom. IX. 27. “Esaías also crieth *concerning* Israel:” where the same greek word is used.) The apostle through this XV. chapter to the Corinthians is proving the doctrine of the resurrection. He lets them know, that the truth of the christian religion stands or falls with this doctrine:—that this is the gospel which was at first preached unto them, which they received, and by their baptism professed to believe. “Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen—and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; you are yet in your sins—but now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept—the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death—Else what shall they do, which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?”

BAPTISM was undoubtedly observed by the Corinthians, and the apostle argues from their own practice. As if he had said. What do you mean by baptism? If the dead rise not at all, why then are you baptized for, or with reference to the dead? Why do you keep up a *figure*, or representation of a *resurrection* from the dead, if the doctrine be not true? If there be no re-

furrection, baptism is a mere idle, insignificant ceremony : and you are very inconsistent with yourselves to deny the doctrine, and still to keep up by your baptism a *figure* or representation of the resurrection from the dead*."

Therefore if the Greek word for baptizing, were sometimes used for sprinkling or pouring, it could not with any propriety be so used with reference to christian baptism: for one of the principal things, implied and designed to be represented by this gospel institution, (*viz. a burial and resurrection*) is wholly lost, when immersion is neglected. No one would suppose a corpse to be buried were a little sand to be sprinkled or poured only on the face : therefore it is evident, that the sprinkling or pouring a little water on the face, cannot represent a burial.

I HAVE been informed, that, where we read *baptize* in the New-Testament, the Dutch translation is *dip*. And were I to *sprinkle* a person, I could with as good a conscience say, I *dip* you in the name &c. as to say, I administer christian baptism to you.

SOME have said, it is no matter as to the quantity of water, three drops are as good as an ocean. And why may we not with as much propriety say, "All the water in the world will do no good, and therefore we will use neither a drop, nor an ocean." I suppose we need not the sea, nor the largest rivers to baptize in ;

* Since writing the above I have seen a large bible containing the Old Testament and the New, with anotations &c. By Samuel Clark : printed in London in the year of our Lord 1690 : in which I find the following passage.

"If there be no resurrection, what shall they be the better, (v. 32.) who are exposed to grievous sufferings (as the word is taken, Mat. xx 22. Luke, xii. 50.) for professing and maintaining the resurrection of some that are dead, viz. Christ, and the Saints? Or thus, What shall they that are baptized, be the better for that significant ceremony, of rising again out of the water after they had been as it were, buried in it; (Rom. vi. 4.) which is a being baptized for the dead, *i. e.* to give assurance, that after they are dead they shall be raised again by the power of Christ."

Thus you see, that more than an hundred years ago, this learned and pious divine understood baptism metaphorically to be overwhelming sufferings, but literally a significant ceremony of rising again out of the water, after they had been, as it were, buried in it. For my part, I do not wonder, that so long as I thought sprinkling was baptism, I was puzzled to find out any sense, or meaning to what the apostle here says.

but we must have a sufficient quantity to answer the design of the institution. As in the Lord's supper, it is not material as to the particular quantity of bread and wine. A person may take two spoonfulls, or four ; but were any one to take so small a piece of bread, as to have it wholly lost in the mouth, and so small a quantity of wine, that there could not be an eating and drinking, the design of the institution would not be answered. So in the other case, we need not an ocean ; but if there be not a sufficient quantity of water, for a person to be dipt or buried, the end of the institution cannot be answered.

I AM so far from supposing, that the baptists exclude proper subjects from this gospel ordinance, that I firmly believe they are the only people in these states, who do, from principle, practise any real water baptism at all : all other denominations only *rantize*, or *sprinkle* instead of baptizing.

If baptism were only the wetting of one part of the body, we should undoubtedly have had some part particularly pointed out ; or else have been informed, that it might be applied to any part indefinitely ; but no such thing is to be found in the Bible.

I HAVE indeed read one author, who labours much to prove, that the face ought to be baptized. But if his main argument for infant-baptism, viz. *that it comes in the room of circumcision*, be well founded, he has certainly made a dreadful mistake. This argument as fully proves, that the *same part ought to be baptized*, which was formerly circumcised, as that the same subjects, who formerly received circumcision, ought now to receive baptism. And the silence of the New-Testament respecting any other part of the body is quite as strong an argument in support of this assertion, as it is in support of infant baptism itself.

SHOULD President Washington require each of his friends to wear a red rose on the *right shoulder*, and also require that each child in every family should wear one on the *same shoulder* ; but should the president

afterwards command his friends to wear a white rose instead of the red one, would they not all put the white rose on the *right shoulder*, though he should say nothing about it? Surely they would.

If Abraham or any one after him had cut off, or circumcised the end of his sons nose, I presume that no one will suppose, that in so doing he would have complied with the instituted right of circumcision : or that it ought to have prevented the child from being circumcised afterward. Therefore, if baptism be in the *room* of circumcision, we have no right to consider the baptism of a nose, or face, as answering the end of the institution. But we may be assured, that baptism never came in the room of that ancient rite.

THUS you see, my friends, that I have become a thorough baptist. I have been baptized, and am now a member of the first baptist church in Boston, under the care of the Rev. Samuel Stillman, D. D.

THUS, dear friends, I have frankly opened my mind to you ; I have told you what I have been—what I am—and *why* I am a baptist. Had I neglected to have been baptized, because I was sprinkled when an infant, I should have made void a commandment of God thro' the traditions of men. And,

I CANNOT but feel disagreeably to hear some people talk as if the observance of baptism, and the Lords supper, were of no kind of importance. This impeaches the wisdom, and goodness of him who has instituted these sacred ordinances.

CAN we suppose, or are we inclined to say, that Christ has commanded something, which might have been as well omitted. If a parent commanded his child to do the least thing imaginable, we should think it very wrong for the child to say, it is a little thing, a matter of indifference, I love my parent, but I need not regard this trifling command. Every parent feels that his authority is slighted, when his commands respecting the smallest things are disregarded. And shall we who profess to be the disciples of Christ, set up our-

selves as being wiser than he. Were he to command us to perform some indifferent action, if we did not obey, we should slight his authority. Independent of God's command, it was an indifferent thing, what tree or trees of the garden our first parents ate of, and God saw fit to make use of such an indifferent thing, as the test of their obedience : but when they ventured to transgress he said to Adam, "Hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?" God had commanded him. Would it have been acceptable to his maker for the man to have plead, *It was an indifferent thing*. When Saul neglected a "mere positive institution," or command, and that too, apparently, with a very pious intention, God severely reproved him, by the mouth of his prophet *Samuel*. "Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst flee upon the spoil, and evil in the sight of the Lord? And Saul said unto Samuel, yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord, and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal. And Samuel said, hath the Lord *as great* delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice; *and* to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion *is as* the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness *is as* iniquity and idolatry: because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from *being* king*."

It is not certain that any thing may not be of great importance, merely because we do not view it in that light. It is always of importance to obey God's commands ; whether we fully understand the design of them or not. But we must be very blind not to see

* 1 Samuel 15. 19--23.

great and noble ends to be answered by those institutions, which point directly to the great *Atonement*.

I THINK no real christian can allow himself in the neglect of any of his Lord's known commands, however great, or small they may be. And will not every friend of Christ, be seeking to know all his commands? Christ hath said, "*If ye love me, keep my commandments—he that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me—ye are my friends, if ye do (not barely some things, nor even the greatest things only, but) whatsoever I command you.—And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*"

To conclude, Although we do not think alike in all respects; yet I hope, as to those things which are the most essential, that we are not so far a-part, but what we are really "built on the foundation of the apostles, and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.

AND if we be right as to the fundamentals of religion, we shall be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." And whenever we arrive to that world of light, where we shall see without prejudice; then we shall be perfectly agreed in all our ideas, and perfectly conformed to the image of the son of God in all the desires of our hearts.

THAT this may be the happy lot of each one of us, is the unfeigned prayer of your sincere and affectionate friend,

PETER PH. ROOTS.

P. S. It may not be amiss in this place, just to mention the different sorts of pædobaptists in New-England.

Episcopalians are considerably numerous in these states. If they had not been new modding the *Rubric*, they would have been the same in profession as the church of England.

Presbyterians, on the same plan with those in Scotland, are but few in number.

The most numerous class of pædobaptists in New-England, are almost without a name. Their ministers and churches generally style themselves *congregationalists*; but they are as often, if not oftener called *presbyterians*. These all hold that ministers or elders only have power to ordain church officers: and they generally profess to believe, that this power has been handed down from the apostles in an uninterrupted line of presbyterian ordinations to this day. They have no ruling elders in their churches—they believe bishops and elders are the same as ministers, who labour in word and doctrine. Excepting their sentiments about ordination, they are independent in their church government. If they call a council from other churches, it is only for advice. These congregational presbyterians are divided among themselves on other subjects. Some are Armenians, and some are Calvinists—some hold to the half-way covenant—some are Stoddardeans, and some are Edwardeans.

Those who hold to the half-way covenant, so called, admit persons to come before the church, and openly profess to believe the scriptures, and to put themselves under the watch and care of the church, (though the church for the most part take no care of them) and to have their children baptized, or rather sprinkled; when at the same time these persons are not supposed to be truly religious; nor do they design to partake of the Lord's supper, unless they get more light, and some evidence of a change in themselves. I have been informed, that some of these churches, being convinced that the scriptures know nothing of half-way members, have voted to consider those, who have been thus admitted, as members in full communion; and so have got rid of the name of half-way members, by making them members in full, without their own consent. Where the half-way practice is in vogue, the greater part of the young married people, so soon as they begin to have children, *own the covenant*, as it is called, and have their children baptized.—The Stoddardeans hold that the Lord's supper is a converting ordinance, and therefore admit those to full communion, whom they do not consider as being the subjects of the new birth.—The Edwardeans admit no adults except those who profess to exercise evangelical repentance and faith; nor do they baptize the children of any other. In some places, after the minister has obtained a comfortable degree of satisfaction, respecting those who wish to become church members, they give him a relation of their experience in writing, which he reads before the church and congregation. Others call a church meeting, and the persons desiring to unite with them, give a verbal relation of the exercises of their own minds; and any member present has opportunity to ask them all the questions he pleases, respecting their experimental, or doctrinal acquaintance with religion. The church, to which the foregoing letter is directed, is one of this sort.

There is one more denomination of pædobaptists in New-England. They are commonly called *separates*, but they style themselves *congregationalists*, or *strict congregationalists*. They, like the first settlers who came to Plymouth, hold that every church has power to ordain her own officers. They usually call in ministers to assist in their ordinations; but this they do not consider as absolutely necessary. They admit none to communion except those, who profess faith in Christ, and whom they consider as being experimentally acquainted with real religion.

The Minister's Farewell.

PARTICULAR METRE.

FAREWELL, my brethren in the Lord,
 The gospel sounds the jubilee;
 My flaming tongue shall speak aloud,
 From land to land, from sea to sea:
 And as I preach from place to place,
 I'll trust alone in God's free grace.

Farewell, in bonds and union dear,
 Like strings you twine about my heart;
 I humbly beg your earnest prayer,
 'Till we shall meet no more to part:
 'Till we shall meet in worlds above
 Encircled by eternal love.

Farewell, my earthly friends below,
 Though all so kind and dear to me,
 My Jesus calls, and I must go
 To sound the gospel jubilee:
 To sound the joys, and bear the news
 The Gentile worlds, and royal Jews.

Farewell, young people, one and all,
 While God shall grant me breath to breathe,
 I'll pray to the Eternal all,
 That your dear souls prepar'd may be,
 That your dear souls prepar'd may be
 To reign in bliss eternally.

Farewell, to all beneath the sun;
 And as I pass in tears below,
 The path is straight, my feet shall run,
 And God will keep me as I go:
 And God will keep me in his hand,
 And bring me to the promis'd land.

Farewell, farewell, I look above;
 Jesus, my friend, to thee I call;
 My joy, my crown, my only love,
 My safeguard here, my heaven my all:
 My theme to preach, my song to sing,
 My only hope in death, *Amen.*



Some Extracts from Dr. John Gill.

DR. Gill says, “ It is pretty much that infant-baptism should be called an *undoubted* apostolic tradition, since it has been *doubted* of by some learned *Pædobaptists* themselves ; nay, some have affirmed that it is not observed by them as an apostolic tradition, particularly *Curcellæus**, and who gives a very good reason for it : his words are these ; “ *pædobaptism* was unknown in the *two* first ages after Christ ; in the *third* and *fourth* it was approved by a few ; at length, in the *fifth* and following ages it began to obtain in divers places ; and therefore this rite is indeed observed by us as an *antient custom*, but not as an *apostolic tradition*.” Bishop Taylor calls it a *pretended* apostolical tradition ; and says, that the tradition cannot be proved to be apostolical. Here’s a tradition no body can tell from whence it comes, and who received it, and handed it down ; for there is not the least mention of it, nor any pretended to in the *first* century, or apostolic age. But let us attend to what evidence is given of it in the next or *second* century.

Two passages are produced out of the writers of this age, to prove this *undoubted apostolic tradition* ; the one out of *Justin Martyr* ; the other out of *Irenæus*. That from *Justin* is as follows† ; “ several persons among us, men and women, sixty and seventy years of age, *oi ek paidoon ematheuteutheesan to Christo, who from their childhood were instructed in Christ*, remain incorrupt :” for so the phrase, on which the whole depends, should be rendered—and which is no other than a verification of what the wise man observes, *Prov. xxii. 6. Train up a child, &c.*

* Institut. Rel. Christ. l. 1. c. 12. † Apolog. 2. p. 62.

THE other passage is out of Irenæous, and stands thus†; “he (Christ) came to save all, all I say, qui per eum renascuntur in Deum, *who by him are born again unto God*, infants, and little ones, and children and young men and old men.” For so the words are to be rendered, and not *baptized unto God*: for the word *revascor* is never used by Irenæous; or rather by his translator in such a sense; nor had it as yet obtained among the antients to use the words *regenerated* and *regeneration* for *baptized* and *baptism*.—Besides to understand Irenæous as speaking of baptism, is to make him at least to suggest a doctrine which is absolutely false; as if Christ came to save all, and only such, who are baptized unto God.—No doubt many are saved by him, who never were baptized with water at all: and on the other hand, nothing is more true than that he came to save all and only those, who are regenerated by the spirit and grace of God, of whatsoever age they be. Upon the whole, what thoughtful man will affirm from hence, that infant-baptism is an *undoubted apostolic tradition*? and seeing these two testimonies are the only ones produced in favour of infant-baptism in the *second* century; and the latter Dr. Wall* confesses, is the *first express mention that we have met with of infants baptized*; tho’ there is no mention at all made of it in it, any more than in the former; he must have a strong faith to believe, and a good assurance upon such evidence to assert, “that the baptism of infants was *the undoubted practice* of the christian church in its *purest* and *first* ages; the *ages* immediately succeeding the *apostles*.” Let us now proceed to the *third* century.

TERTULIAN is the first man that ever made mention of infant-baptism that we know of; and as he was the first that spoke of it, he at the same time spoke against it, dissuaded from it, and advised to defer it; and tho’ he was quite *singular*, as our author says, in

† Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 272. * Hist of Infant-baptism, par. r. ch. 3. § 6.

this his advice ; it should be observed, that he is also quite *singular* in his mention of the thing itself ; there being no writings of any cotemporary of his extant, from which we might learn their sense of this affair. We allow that infant-baptism was moved in the *third* century ; that it then began to be talked of, and became a matter of debate, and might be practised in the *African* churches, where it was first moved. We do not deny the *probability* of the practice of it then, tho' the *certainty* of it does not appear ; it is *probable* it might be practised, but it is not *certain* it was ; as yet it has not been proved. Now here we stick, by this we abide, that there is no mention made of it in any authentic writer before *Tertullian's* time, and this writer himself elsewhere * observes, that " by *his* time, it is well known, a great variety of *superstitious*, and ridiculous, and foolish rites were brought into the church." The date of infant baptism cannot, we apprehend, be carried higher than his time ; and we require of any of our learned *Pædobaptist* brethen, to produce a single passage out of any authentic writer before *Tertullian*, in which infant-baptism is *expressly* mentioned, or *clearly* hinted at, or *plainly* supposed, or *manifestly* referred unto. This being the case, as we own it began in this century, and might be practised by some, it might be needless in a good measure to consider after-testimonies ; however, I shall not think fit wholly to neglect them.

ORIGEN is next quoted, and *three* passages out of him ; shewing that the baptism of infants is a tradition of the apostles, and an usage of the church for the remission of sins ; but it should be observed, that these quotations are not from the *Greek* of *Origen* ? he wrote much in that language, and there is much still extant in it ; and yet nothing is produced from thence, that can fairly be construed in favour of infant-baptism ; though many things may be observed from thence, in

* The dissenting gentleman's *third* letter, &c, p. 32.

favour of adult-baptism. The *three* passages are quoted out of some *Latin* translations, greatly interpolated, and not to be depended on. His *Homillies* on *Leviticus*, and exposition of the epistle to the *Romans*, out of which *two* of them are taken, are translated by *Ruffinus*; who, with the former, he himself owns, used much freedom, and added much, and took such a liberty in both, of adding, taking away, and changing that as *Erasmus* * says, whoever reads these pieces, it is uncertain whether he reads *Origen* or *Ruffinus*; and *Vossius* observest, that the former of these was interpolated by *Ruffinus*, and thinks therefore, that the passage cited was of the greatest authority against the *Pelagians*, because *Ruffinus* was inclined to them. The *Homilies* on *Luke* out of which is the other passage, were translated by *Jerom*, of whom *Du Pin* says†, that his *versions* are not more exact than *Ruffinus*'s. Now both these lived at the latter end of the *fourth* century; and it looks very probable, that these very passages are additions or interpolations of these men, since the language agrees with those times, and no other; for no cotemporary of *Origen*'s, nor any writer before him, or after him, until the times of *Ruffinus*, *Jerom* and *Austin*, speak of infant-baptism as an usage of the church, or an apostolical tradition; in short, as bishop *Taylor* observest‡, “a tradition apostolical, if it be not con- signed with a fuller testimony than of one person (*Origen*,) whom all after-ages have condemned of many errors, will obtain so little reputation amongst those, who know that things have upon greater authority pretended to derive from the apostles, and yet falsely; that it will be a great argument, that he is credulous, and weak, that shall be determined by so weak a probation, in matter of so great concernment.”

CYPRIAN with his council of *sixty-six* bishops, are brought as witnesses of infant-baptism, a little after the middle of the *third* century. We allow that as infant-

* In Rivet. Critici Sacri, l. 2. c. 12. p. 202. † Hist. Pelag. par. 1. l. 2. p. 147. ‡ Hist. Eccl. Vol. 1. p. 132. § Liberty of prophesying, p. 320.

baptism, was moved for in *Tertullian's* time, so it obtained in the *African* churches in *Cyprian's* time; but then by *Fidus* the country bishop, applying to the council to have a doubt resolved, whether it was lawful to baptize infants until they were eight days old, it appears to be a novel practice; and that as yet it was undetermined by council or custom, when they were to be baptized; whether as soon as born, or on the eighth day, or whether it was to be left to every one's liberty: and it should also be observed, that in this age, infant-communion was practised as well as infant-baptism; and very likely both began together, as it is but reasonable, that if the one be admitted, the other should.

AND now we are come to a very *remarkable* and *decisive* testimony as it is called, from the writings of *Austin* and *Pelagius*: the sum of which is, that there began a controversy between these two persons about original sin, the latter who denied it, was pressed by the former, with an argument taken from the baptism of infants for the remission of sins: with which *Pelagius* seemed exceedingly embarrassed, when it greatly concerned him to deny it if he could; and had it been an innovation, so acute, learned, and sagacious a man as he was, would have discovered it; but on the contrary, when he was charged with a denial of it as the consequence of his opinion, he warmly declaims it, and complains of a slander? and adds, that he never heard that even any impious heretic denied it, or refused it to infants; and the same says *Austin*, that it never was denied by any man, catholic or heretic, and was the constant usage of the church; for all which vouchers are produced. To which may be replied.

[Here for the want of room I must pass over the Doctor's 1, 2, 3 and 4 remarks: but he observes,]

5. PELAGIUS says no such thing, that he never heard, no not even any impious heretic who denied baptism to infants. His words indeed are*, *nunquam se vel*

* In Aug. de peccato originali, l. 2. c. 18.

impium aliquem hæreticum audisse qui hoc, quod proposuit, de parvulis diceret ; that he never heard, no not any impious heretic, that would say concerning infants, what he had proposed or mentioned : the sense depends upon the meaning of the phrase, quod proposuit, what he had proposed or mentioned, of whom, and what that is to be understood ; whether of Austin, and the state of the case as proposed, and set down by him ; so our author seems to understand it, since by way of explanation he adds, viz. that unbaptized infants are not liable to the condemnation of the first man, and that they are not to be cleansed by the regeneration of baptism : but this gentleman has not put it as Austin has stated it, which is thus ; “ it is objected to them (the Pelagians) that they will not own that unbaptized infants are liable to the condemnation of the first man, and in eos transisse originale peccatum regeneratione purgandum, and that original sin has passed upon them to be cleansed by regeneration ; ” and according to this sense the meaning cannot be, that he never heard that any heretic denied baptism to infants ; but either that he never heard that any one should say, that unbaptized infants are not liable to the condemnation of the first man, and that original sin had not passed upon them to be cleansed by regeneration ; but then this is to bring the wicked heretics as witnesses against himself, and to make himself worse than they : or the meaning is, that he never heard that any of them should say, that unbaptized infants are liable to the condemnation of the first man, and that original sin has passed upon them to be cleansed by regeneration, which is most likely ; but then this makes rather against, than for the thing for which it is brought ; since it makes the heretic as never saying that infants stood in need of being cleansed by baptism : or else, quod proposuit, what he had proposed or mentioned, refers to Pelagius, and to the state of the question as he had put it ; representing that he was charged with promising the kingdom of heaven to some, without the redemption of Christ ; and of this he might say, he never heard

the most impious heretic so say ; and this seems to be the sense by what he subjoins ; “ for who is so ignorant of what is read in the Gospel, not only as to attempt to affirm it, but even lightly mention it, or even imagine it ? Moreover, who so impious that would exclude infants from the kingdom of heaven, *dum eos baptizari. Et in Christo renasci putat* ? whilst he thinks, or is of opinion that they are baptized and regenerated in Christ ? ” for so it is in my edition* of *Austin* ; *putat*, and not *vetat*, as Dr. Wall quotes it ; and after him this gentleman : and *Pelagius* further adds, “ who so impious as to forbid to an infant of whatsoever age, the common redemption of mankind ? ” but this, *Austin* says, like the rest is ambiguous ; what redemption he means, whether from bad to good, or from good to better : now take the words which way you will, they can’t be made to say, that he had never heard that any heretic denied baptism to infants, but that he denied the kingdom of heaven to them : and indeed every one must allow, whoever is of that opinion, that infants are by baptism really regenerated in Christ ; which was the prevailing notion of those times, and the light in which it is put ; that they must belong to the kingdom of heaven, and share in the common redemption by Christ.

6. *Austin* himself does not say, that he had never heard or read of any catholic, heretic, or schismatic, that denied infant-baptism ; he could never say any such thing ; he must know, that *Tertullian* had opposed it ; and he himself was at the Council of *Carthage*, and there presided, and was at the making of that canon which runs thus ; “ also it is our pleasure, that whoever denies that new-born infants are to be baptized—let him be anathema : ” but to what purpose was this canon made, if he and his brethren knew of none that denied infant-baptism ? *Austin* himself makes mention of some that argued against it, after this manner ;

* Ed. Antwerp. by Plantine, 1576. † De libero Arbitrio, l. 3. c. 23.

“men are used to ask this question, says he, of what profit is the sacrament of christian baptism to infants, seeing when they have received it, for the most part they die before they know any thing of it?” and as before observed, he brings in the *Pelagians* saying*, that the infants of believers ought not to be baptized: and so *Jerom†*, who was a cotemporary of his, speaks of some christians, *qui dare noluerint baptismum, who refused to give baptism to their children*; so that tho’ infant-baptism greatly obtained in those times, yet it was not so general as this author represents it.

Every *honest* man that receives infant-baptism upon the foot of tradition, ought to receive every thing else upon the same foot, of which there is equally as *full*, and as *early* evidence of *apostolic tradition*, as of this: let it then be observed,

1. That the same *Austin* that asserts infant-baptism to be an apostolic tradition, affirms infant-communion to be so likewise, as Bishop *Taylor‡* observes; and thus *Austin* says§, “if they pay any regard to the *apostolic authority*, or rather to the Lord and Master of the apostles, who says, that they have no life in themselves, unless they eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, which they can’t do unless baptized, will sometimes own that unbaptized infants have not life.”—and a little after, “no man that remembers that he is a christian, and of the catholic faith, denies or doubts that infants not having the grace of regeneration in Christ, and without eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, have no life in them; but are hereby liable to everlasting punishment;” by which he means the two sacraments of baptism, and the Lord’s supper; the necessity of both which to eternal life he founded upon a mistaken sense of *John* iii. 5. and vi. 53. as appears from what he elsewhere says§; where having mentioned the first of those passages, he cites the latter, and

* De peccator. merit. l. 2. c. 25. † Ep. ad Lætam. T. I. fol. 19. M.

‡ Liberty of prophesying, p. 119. § Ep. 106. Bonifacio, contr. Pelag.

|| De peccator. merit. and remitt. l. 1. c. 20.

adds ; “ let us hear the Lord, I say, not indeed speaking this of the sacrament of the holy laver; but of the sacrament of the holy table; whither none rightly come unless baptized. *Except ye eat my flesh, and drink my blood, ye shall have no life in you*; what do we seek for further? what can be said in answer to this, unless one would set himself obstinately against clear and invincible truth? will any one dare to say this, that this passage does not belong to infants; and that they can have life in themselves, without partaking of his body and blood?” And the necessity of this, as well as of baptism to eternal life, he says* the *African* christians took to be an antient and apostolic tradition. *Innocent* the first, his cotemporary, was also of the same mind; and the giving of the Eucharist to infants generally obtained; and it continued six hundred years after, until transubstantiation took place; and is continued to this day in the *Greek* church; and if we look back to the times before *Austin*, we shall find that it was not only the opinion of *Cyprian*, but was practised in his time.

*The following extracts are taken from ELDER BALDWIN'S
Reply to the remarks of the Rev. NOAH WORCESTER, &c.*

HAVING thus mentioned the places chosen by John, we shall next take notice of the place where Philip baptized the eunuch, which you suppose to be a matter of necessity rather than choice; be that as it may, the account informs us,—*they came unto a certain water*; supposed by Mr. Poole to be a fountain in a town called Bethsora, or a river called Eleutherus, which in that road must be passed over†.

Jerom describes the town of Bethsoron, and mentions the fountain in it, in which he saith, “ the Acts of the Apostles relate, that the eunuch of queen Candace was baptized here by Philip‡.”

* Ibid. c. 24. † Pol. in loc. ‡ De locis Hebræicis, Fol. 89. 6.

Borchardus is of opinion, that it was "*Nebel Escol*, that is, *The Brook of the Cluster*, from whence the spies carried the grapes; to the left of this valley, for the space of a mile, runs a *river*, in which Philip baptized the eunuch of queen Candace, not far from Sicelech†."

Thus we have traced John and his candidates, and Philip and the eunuch, to the water-side; we are now prepared to consider the consequent action. It is said of John, that the people who went out to him, *were baptized of him in Jordan.*—*And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway OUT OF THE WATER*||. It is added by Mark—*And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan, and straightway COMING UP OUT OF THE WATER.* It is said of Philip and the eunuch,—*they went down both INTO THE WATER, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him; and when they were come up out of the water, he went on his way rejoicing.*

Now, Sir, can any person compare these accounts for a moment, and not see the manifest agreement in the *action* of John and Philip. Let the rite be performed in what mode soever, it is evident it was the *same* in the people whom John baptized, and in the Saviour, and in the eunuch. You observe in this last instance, there is "no account of any particular mode whatever." I must take the liberty here, again to dissent from you: for, I conclude it is a very particular account of the mode of plunging. Were you to be informed by a person of your acquaintance, that he saw a minister who was a stranger to him, go down into the water with a candidate, and that he baptized him, and that they came up out of the water,—I am persuaded, without hesitation, you would conclude that they were Baptists; and the account here given would decide the point in your mind, and perhaps in any other person's, in what *mode* the ordinance was administered. Again, if instead of saying they went down both into

* Pol. in loc. † De locis Hebraicis, Fol. 89. 6. ‡ Descript. terræ Sanct. c. 9. in Dr. Gill in loc. || Matt. iii. 6, 16. Mark i. 9.

the water, it had been said that the candidate ascended, or was carried up the pulpit stairs, (which is now the custom in many places) it would afford a strong presumption in favour of affusion.

Although what has been offered may be considered as ample proof of the question in dispute, yet being desirous of giving you full satisfaction, I shall proceed to lay before you one consideration more, which appears to us of considerable weight in the present case; and that is, the native signification of the Greek verb, *baptizo*, to baptize, which we suppose necessarily requires dipping. We are fully sensible at the same time, that this sense has been controverted by many men of eminent abilities; notwithstanding, we think the evidence greatly preponderates in our favour. Nor shall we think it a difficult task to prove the sense for which we plead, from Pædo-baptists themselves; and that too, from some as *learned* and *judicious* as any whose names adorn the biographical page. This kind of evidence I conclude you can have no reasonable objection to, because you cannot suspect them of any design against themselves, nor will they make any concessions to sentiments which they oppose, farther than truth obliges them to; therefore, I may say of their evidence in the present case, as David did of Goliath's sword, *there is none like it*.

I may have occasion hereafter to mention some writers of a much earlier date, but I shall here begin with Luther. In his translation of the New Testament, he has rendered the Greek word to baptize by the German *taufen*, and in his words he hath expressly declared, that the baptismal verb *taufen*, signifies to immerse, or to plunge into the water.* Thus Matt. iii. 1. *Zu der zeit kam Johannes der tauffer*; In those days came John the dipper. To this we may add the testimony of the Genevian oracle, Calvin, who says, “the word *baptize* signifies to dip: and it is certain that the man-

* Op. De baptismo. in Robinson's Hist. Bap. p. 442.

ner of dipping was used of the ancient church†." Shall I add to this, the testimony of that celebrated Professor of divinity, Witfius. "It cannot be denied (saith he) that the native signification of the word *Baptien* and *Baptizein*, is, to plunge, to dip†." Full to the same point are also the words of Vitringa. "The act of baptizing, is the immersion of believers in water. This expresses the force of the word. Thus also it was performed by Christ and his Apostles."||

If you please, we will now look at the ancient Helvetia Confession, first written in the year 1536, by or under the direction of Bucer, ten years before the death of Luther, and afterwards published again by the pastors of Zurich, in 1566 : in which we have the following unequivocal declaration : "Baptism was instituted and consecrated by God, and the first that baptized was John, who DIPPED CHRIST IN THE WATER IN *Jordan* ; from him it came to the Apostles, who also did baptize with water."

The Confession of Saxony, written by Melancthon, in the year 1551, perfectly agrees with the above ; I will now transcribe it. "Baptism is an entire action, to wit, a DIPPING, and the pronouncing of these words, *I baptize thee in the Name of the Father*," and so on*. These two last are not to be considered merely as the testimony of two men, or two particular churches, but as including a number of churches in two large districts.

As Mr. Poole was justly esteemed a learned and critical expositor, you will perhaps be willing to hear his opinion in the present case. "A great part (saith he) of those who went out to hear John, were *baptized*, that is, dipped in *Jordan*." "To be baptized is to be *dipped in water* ; metaphorically, to be plunged in afflictions : I am, saith Christ, to be—overwhelmed with sufferings and afflictions†." To this we may add

† Institut. Christ. Relig. L. iv. C. xv. § 19.

† Oeconom. Fœd. L. iv. C. xvi. § 13.

† Aphorismi Sanct. Theolog. Aphorif. 884. in Booth.

* Harmony of Confessions, p. 395, 404.

† Annot. on Matt. iii. 6. and xx. 22.

the testimony of Mr. Daniel Rogers : “ None (saith he) of old were wont to be sprinkled ; and I confess myself unconvinced by demonstration from scripture for Infant-sprinkling. It ought to be the church’s part to cleave to the institution, which is *dipping* ; and he betrays the church, whose officer he is, to a disorderly error, if he cleave not to the institution, which is to *dip*. That the minister is to dip in water as the meetest act, the word *baptizo* notes it. For the Greeks wanted not other words to express any other act beside dipping, if the institution could bear it.” “ To dip therefore is *exceeding material* to the ordinance ; which was the usage of old, without exception of countries, hot or cold*.”

The above quotations are all made from Pædo-baptist writers, to which I wish to add one observation from a late learned historian :—“ A linguist (says he) determines himself by his own knowledge of the Greek language, and an illiterate man, by the best evidence he can obtain from the testimony of others, whom by his condition he is obliged to trust.

“ To the latter it is sufficient to observe, that the word is confessedly *Greek*, that native Greeks must understand their own language better than foreigners, and that they have always baptized, and do yet baptize, by immersion. This is an authority for the meaning of the word infinitely preferable to that of European lexicographers ; so that a man, who is obliged to trust human testimony, and who baptizes by immersion, because the Greeks do, understands a Greek word exactly as the Greeks themselves understand it ; and in this case the Greeks are unexceptionable guides, and their practice is in this instance safe ground of action†.” This last remark is confirmed by Dr. Wall, who assures us, that “ The Greek church, in all the branches of it, in Europe, Asia, Egypt and Ethiopia, has always pre-

* Treatise of the two Sac. Part I. Chap. v. and viii. in Booth’s Pædo-bap. Exam. p. 23.

† Robinson’s Hist. of Baptism, p. 5, 6.

served the custom of *dipping* infants in baptism, that were in health, and able to bear it."† By the term *always*, we must understand from the time when they first began to baptize infants.

I will not for the present trouble you with any more quotations from Pædo-baptists, but will hold myself engaged to produce five times as many, whenever there shall be a reasonable demand. I conclude, if human testimony can establish any point, we must allow, from the disinterested nature of the evidence now considered, that the native signification of the Greek verb *baptizo*, (which must determine the proper sense of our English word to baptize) to be fairly settled.

If the institution requires no more than to sprinkle a few drops of water in the face, any person must be strangely superstitious to be immersed. And on the other hand, if it does really require immersion, then those who only sprinkle must fall materially short, and have scarcely the shadow of the ordinance. To suppose that sprinkling, pouring, or immersion, are all indifferent, is in fact to suppose that nothing is commanded; or at least no more than sprinkling†. When persons believe this, there is an end to immersion; for men are not generally fond of doing more than is required. This, Sir, your practice demonstrates. You believe either way answers the institution; but you, with other Pædo-baptists in general, choose sprinkling; I think it probable that I should do the same, could I be convinced that your views were right. It is also probable,

† Defence of Hist. of Infant-baptism, p. 148.

† The three terms in dispute are all used in Lev. vi. 6, 7, in the following manner; "And the priest shall (*bapsei*) dip his finger in the blood, and (*prosranei*) sprinkle of the blood seven times before the Lord;---and shall (*ekcheei* [a]) pour all the blood of the bullock at the bottom of the altar.

That these rites were not the same and to be used indifferently, the following familiar transposition will abundantly show:---And the priest shall pour his finger in the blood, and shall dip of the blood seven times before the Lord; and shall sprinkle all the blood at the bottom of the altar.

[a] Septuaginta in loc.

that John the baptist, Christ and his Apostles, Philip, and the ancient Christians, had they viewed the matter in the same light which you do, would have invariably administered it by sprinkling : for there could have been no possible occasion which would have required immersion, in case the other way would equally well express the design.

From a careful retrospection of the arguments made use of in the course of this lengthy Section, the candid will be able to judge, whether we are unreasonable, in saying that *immersion* is essential to the right administration of the ordinance. That I have not exaggerated sober fact, will be made evident by a quotation which I shall now subjoin. Dr. Wall, who has been mentioned, was so highly esteemed by the English clergy for his learning and zeal in defending Infant-baptism, that in a general convocation, Feb. 9, 1706, they passed the following vote ; “ Ordered, That the thanks of this house be given to Mr. Wall, Vicar of Shoreham in Kent, for the Learned and excellent book he hath lately written concerning Infant-baptism.” Yet notwithstanding this gentleman’s profound learning, and all the advantages he had derived from his painful research into the remotest depths of antiquity, to procure materials of defence,—he was obliged to acknowledge, that Dr. Gale had drawn him into a dispute upon the mode of baptism, “ wherein (saith he) *he* he knew, that the examples of scripture and other antiquity, and the full persuasion of that people, and of all the Eastern church to this day, is on his side ; and I had the disadvantage to plead for a way of baptism, of which the best I could say, was, that it was sufficient for the essence of baptism ; but could not deny the other (except in the case of danger of health) to be the fittest*.” It must be acknowledged, that Dr. Wall was under most painful disadvantages in vindicating his cause : for he had not only to oppose

* Defense of the Hist. Inf. Bap. p. 404.

the learned Dr. Gale, but the full conviction of his own mind, that scripture example, and the whole current of antiquity, were against him.

Upon the whole, this much is certain, that there is neither express command, or example, either in the law of Moses, or in the gospel of Jesus Christ, to sprinkle water upon new-born infants, as an initiating seal of any covenant whatever†. Therefore, we may say with Dr. Whitby, whose words shall close this Section —“The argument is always good : We read of no such doctrine in the scripture ; therefore it neither is, nor can be any *article of faith*, because we have no other rule of faith besides the holy scriptures‡.”

† It is abundantly evident, that many persons who were born of Christian parents, and educated in the Christian faith, were not baptized until they came to *adult* years, and made a personal profession.

Helena, the mother of Constantine, was a very devout and zealous Christian, yet he was not baptized upon her faith. Nor did he dedicate his own children to God in baptism by virtue of *his* faith : for we are informed by Socrates, that his son Constantius, who succeeded his father in the empire, was baptized by Euzoius when he was preparing for his expedition against Julianus, and immediately after ended his life at Mopsucrania, twenty-five years after the death of his father.----*Eccl. Hist. Lib. ii. Chap. xlvii.*

Basil, the son of Basil, bishop of Nicene, was baptized in Jordan when far advanced in years.

Gregory the great, the son of Gregory, bishop of Nazianzen, was born while his father was bishop, and yet not baptized until he was twenty, some say thirty years old.----*See Osiander's Book, Cent. iv. L. 3. and Robinson's Hist. p. 250.*

Grotius says, that Chrysostom was born of believing parents, and was educated by Melitius, a bishop, yet not baptized till the age of twenty-one.

Erasmus testifies, that Jerom was born in the city of Stridon, of Christian parents, was brought up in the Christian religion, and was baptized in the thirtieth year of his age.

Vossius affirms, that Nestarius was chosen bishop of Constantinople before he was baptized.

Theodosius, the emperor, was born in Spain ; his parents were both Christians, and from his childhood had been trained up in the Nicene faith ; was baptized at Thessalonica, by Achalio, when he was upwards of thirty years old.----*Vide Junius, Junior, p. 68. Rob. p. 250. Eccl. Hist. Lib. v. Chap. vi.*

‡ Annot. in Matt. vi. 9.

I SHALL now lay before the reader some extracts, taken from "A Dissertation on the scriptural qualifications for admission and access to the Christian sacraments, &c.—By NATHANIEL EMMONS, A. M. Minister of the Gospel in Franklin," (Massachusetts;) as his testimony in favour of the Baptists.

"AS CERTAIN ALSO OF YOUR OWN POETS HAVE SAID."
St. Paul.

CHAPTER I.

A definition of the Church.

THE scripture uses the term church in three senses, which have some reference to the subject before us, and which, therefore, deserve to be distinctly considered.

1. The scripture sometimes uses the term church, to signify the whole number of mankind who shall finally be sanctified and saved. The Apostle, speaking of Christ's supremacy, Ephes. i. 22, 23, says, "That God hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be head over all things to *the church*." In the third chapter, he further says, "That God created all things by Christ, to the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by *the church* the manifold wisdom of God." And in the next chapter but one he says again, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved *the church*, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." In each of these passages, the Apostle uses the word church, to comprehend all the elect, who shall finally be brought to the kingdom of glory. And this is what is called the *universal invisible church*.

2. By the church, the scripture sometimes intends the whole number of God's *professing* people in all parts of the world. While the Jews were the only professing people in the world, they were called the church of God. Hence the Apostle, Heb. ii. 12, represents Christ as saying to Israel, "I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of *the church* will I sing praise unto thee." Of Moses it is said, "This is he that was in *the church* in the wilderness." In 1 Cor. xii. 28, the Apostle says, "God hath set some in *the church*, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers; after that miracles, &c." And speaking of himself as a persecutor, he says, "I am the least of the Apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted *the church of God*." The church here means God's professing people, or the *universal visible church*. But,

3. The church is more commonly used in the New-Testament, to signify a particular society of christians, who usually meet in one place to worship God, and enjoy the ordinances of the gospel. Thus we read of the church of God at Corinth, of the church of the Thessalonians, and of the seven churches of Asia. These were all congregational churches, or such small societies of christians as might conveniently come together for religious worship.

CHAPTER II.

The covenant of grace considered.

SECT. I.

The general nature of covenanting.

THERE is a wide distinction between covenants, declarations, and promises. A simple declaration creates no obligation, but only expresses the present intention of the mind. If a man declare today, in the presence of others, that he will go to a certain place

tomorrow, this simple declaration lays him under no more obligation to go to the place mentioned, than if his intention had lain a secret in his own breast. If he alters his intention, he may perhaps be charged with fickleness, but not with falsehood. An absolute promise excites expectation, and of course creates obligation. When a man makes an absolute promise, he binds himself to the person to whom he makes it. And that person may either dissolve, or confirm his obligation to fulfil his engagement. A conditional promise is made upon the supposition of a certain contingency, and becomes binding, only in case that contingency happens. Suppose a man should promise to do a certain piece of work for his neighbour, provided he should procure assistance, or recover his health; in that case, the obligation to performance would depend entirely upon the taking place of the contingency, upon which it was made.

But a covenant is a mutual contract, stipulation, or agreement, between two or more parties, by which they bind themselves to each other, upon certain conditions. Every covenant requires the consent of the parties concerned. If a covenant be proposed by one party, but is rejected by the other, there is no covenant made, nor either party holden. Mutual consent is the only thing which gives sanction to a covenant. But after the parties have given their mutual consent, the covenant is confirmed, and neither of them can refuse a performance of the conditions, without a violation of their covenant engagements.

These are the peculiar properties, which distinguish a covenant from a mere promise, or a mere declaration; and which are essential to every species of covenanting, whether human or divine. A covenant between God and man is of the same general nature, as a covenant between man and man. God can no more enter into covenant with men, without their personal consent, than they can enter into covenant with each other, without their personal consent. If we meet

with any thing in scripture therefore, which is called a covenant, but which, at the same time, does not contain a mutual promise or engagement between two or more parties, we are obliged, by the nature of the case, to explain it in a figurative, rather than a literal sense. Thus the promise which God made to Noah, that he would never destroy the world again by a flood, is called in scripture a covenant, and the rainbow is represented as a token or seal of the covenant. But since we find this divine promise was made without any promise or consent on man's part, we are compelled to consider it as an absolute promise, and not as a proper or literal covenant. God often speaks after the manner of men, and uses words in a large or figurative sense, when the natural connections in which they stand, or the particular subject to which they are applied, will clearly determine their proper meaning.

But some, however, object against the placing of human and divine covenants upon the same foundation. They argue that God, who is a sovereign, has a right to take his creatures into covenant, without their previous consent. This is the sentiment of a very ingenious and elegant writer. Speaking upon the subject, he asks, "Has not God a right to enjoin such duties as his wisdom sees fit? Must he consult his creatures, to know what laws he may make for them? Was not the covenant in the plains of Moab, made with little ones, as well as with the men of Israel? With those who were not, as well as with those who were, then present? Are there not moral obligations which result from our rational nature, and from our place in the creation, as well as from our special covenant relation to God? Shall we conclude that all these obligations are void, for want of our previous consent? To contract between man and man, who stand on the foot of equality, mutual consent is necessary: but God is a sovereign. When he promises us certain blessings, and enjoins particular duties, as conditions of the blessings, he takes us into covenant, whether we had pre-

viously consented or not*.” The force of this reasoning depends on three propositions, the truth of which we will distinctly consider.

1. That God has a right to lay mankind under covenant obligation, by his own sovereign act.

2. That he has a right to bring mankind into covenant, without their consent. And,

3. That he brought some of the children of Israel into covenant, in this sovereign way.

1. Let us consider whether it be true, that God has a right to lay mankind under the obligations of a covenant, by his own sovereign act. It is readily allowed, that God has a right to give such laws and to grant such favors to men, as his infinite wisdom sees best. But the obligations which result from such acts of divine sovereignty, are totally different from the obligations which men lay upon themselves, by a covenant transaction. When they covenant with God, they *voluntarily* promise to obey his commands. And it is this voluntary promise, which creates the bond of the covenant. Though God has a right to command men to covenant, yet his command, without their consent, cannot lay them under covenant obligations. As God is not obliged to enter into covenant with his creatures, so his entering into covenant with them is an act of condescension. In this sense, he does not enter into covenant with his creatures, on the foot of equality. But though we admit his condescension, yet we deny his sovereignty, in his covenant transactions. When he condescends to covenant with his creatures, he always covenants with them on the *equal* terms of mutual consent. For it is impossible, in the nature of things, that he should make *a covenant*, any more than *a promise*, for his creatures, by his own sovereign act.

2. Let us consider whether it be true, that God can bring mankind into covenant, without their consent. This is supposed in the reasoning above. “When

* Doctor Lathrop's Discourse in the American Preacher, page 58, 59.

God promises us certain blessings, and enjoins particular duties, as conditions of the blessings, he takes us into covenant, whether we had previously consented or not." The language of this proposition is, that when God proposes a covenant to men, he actually takes them into covenant, whether they accept or reject the proposal. This, we have just shown, is not within the province of divine sovereignty.

But we would further observe, if God takes men into covenant by the bare proposal of it, then he takes every person into covenant to whom he sends the gospel. For the gospel "promises certain blessings, and enjoins certain duties, as conditions of the blessings," to all to whom it is sent. But have all the Jews and Gentiles, who have heard and rejected the gospel, been taken into covenant? Have all the thieves, and drunkards, and deists, and atheists, who have heard the gospel in this land, been taken into covenant? If this be true, then they are all visible saints, and have a right of access and admission to special ordinances; and we ought to receive them to baptism and the Lord's supper. This consequence necessarily flows from the principle, that God takes men into covenant by proposing the covenant to them, whether they receive or reject the proposal. But if it be absurd to call and treat the openly vicious and profligate as visible saints; then it is equally absurd to suppose that God can bring mankind into covenant, without, and contrary to their own consent. It only remains to inquire,

3. Whether it be true, that God indeed took some of the children of Israel into covenant, who neither heard nor consented to the covenant. This is supposed. And the supposition is entirely built upon that noted passage in the xxixth of Deuteronomy. "Neither with you only do I make this covenant and this oath: But with him that standeth here with us this day before the Lord our God, *and also with him that is not here with us this day.*" The plain literal meaning of this text of scripture is, that God entered into cov-

enant with some of the Israelites, who neither heard nor consented to the covenant. But we cannot admit this literal sense of the passage, for various reasons.

1. Because it is contrary to the nature of things, that God should take men into covenant, without their knowledge and consent. This is evident from what has been said under the two last particulars. And whenever any passage of scripture, in its literal sense, contradicts the nature of things, we always suppose we ought to look out for some different meaning.

2. It appears from the preceeding words, that God required all who were present to give their explicit consent to the covenant. "Ye stand this day all of you before the Lord your God; your captains of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, with all the men of Israel, your little ones, your wives, and thy stranger that is in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood, unto the drawer of thy water: That thou shouldest *enter into covenant* with the Lord thy God, and into his oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day." According to the representation here, God proposed the covenant to the Israelites, and required them to give their explicit consent to it. And agreeably to the divine injunction; they all avouched the Lord to be their God, and to keep the covenant and the oath which he proposed to them. But why all this formality and solemnity, if there were no occasion for it? And there was no occasion for it, if God could have taken them into covenant without their knowledge and consent.

3. It appears, by a standing statute in Israel, that God meant to take that people into covenant, from generation to generation, by their own explicit consent. This statute is in Deut. xxxi. 9,—13. And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, and unto all the elders of Israel. And Moses commanded them, saying, At the end of seven years, in the solemnity of the year of release, in the feast of tabernacles, when all Israel is come to appear before

the Lord thy God, in the place which he shall choose; thou shalt read this law before all Israel *in their hearing*. Gather the people together, men, and *women*, and *children*, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may *hear*, and that they *may learn*, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law; *and that their children, which have not known any thing*, may *hear*, and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it." All the circumstances here mentioned naturally lead us to suppose, that this reading of the law was designed to give the adult an opportunity of renewing, and the youth an opportunity of entering into covenant with God. It was to be on the sabbatical year, which was devoted to religious duties. It was to be in a particular place appointed by God. And it was to be for the particular benefit of the children or youth. Such a reading of the law was calculated, in a peculiar manner, for covenanting. And no doubt it was appointed for the especial purpose of giving every youth in Israel, from seven to thirteen years of age, an opportunity of making a publick and explicit covenant with God. Hence there is no reason to suppose that any of the Israelites, from Moses to Christ, were ever taken into covenant without their knowledge and consent.

4. If we understand the text under consideration in a literal sense, it will prove more than the advocates of the literal sense will be willing to admit. The plain literal declaration is, that God entered into covenant with him that was absent, as well as him that was present. And this will prove, that God may take *men* as well as *infants*, into covenant without their knowledge and consent. But most, if not all the advocates for the literal sense, do not wish to extend the argument so far. All that they ever adduce it to prove is, that God may take *infants* into covenant, without their knowledge and consent. They generally suppose, that adult per-

sons cannot be taken into covenant without, and much less contrary to, their own voluntary engagements. This is certainly Dr. Hemmenway's opinion: For he says, page 11, 12, "Though the proposals of the covenant are of important concernment to all mankind, especially to those, who have offers of divine grace made to them, *yet a rejected tender* of the covenant does not give one an interest in it. And though the call of the gospel lays a bond of duty on all to whom it is sent, *yet the bond of the covenant*, as the expression is commonly understood, properly lies only on those who have come under vows or engagements of obedience, either *by their own personal act*, or *by the restipulation of those who are authorised to act for them*. When those who are not under covenant bonds disobey the call of the gospel to them, *requiring their consent to its proposal*, they are guilty of refusing the covenant. But when those who are under covenant bonds violate them, they are guilty of perfidiously breaking the covenant. A circumstance which enhances their disobedience." The Doctor here supposes, that none but *infants, who have some to restipulate for them*, can be taken into covenant without consenting to the covenant. As to *adults*, who are capable of acting for themselves, he is clearly of the opinion, that nothing short of their own voluntary act, can bring them under the bond of the covenant. But if the text before us proves, that *infants* may be brought into covenant without their knowledge and consent, then it equally proves, that any *adult* persons may be laid under the bond of the covenant, without their consent. And if this be true, then God may now take all the Heathens on the face of the earth into covenant, without their knowing or embracing the gospel. But this sentiment is too gross for any to admit, and therefore the literal sense of the text we are considering, can by no means be adopted. This leads me to observe once more,

5. That when we are told God took the absent as well as present into covenant, the true and obvious

meaning is, that he meant to propose the covenant to all, and to require all, as opportunity presented, to embrace it, and lay themselves under covenant obligations to obedience. God intended that the covenant he proposed to Israel in the plains of Moab, should be proposed to all that nation from time to time, and from age to age, just as Christ intended that the gospel which he commissioned his Apostles to preach to all the world, should eventually be preached to all nations on the face of the earth, before the end of time.

It now appears, we trust, that all covenants are of the same nature, and stand upon the same foundation; that they all require the mutual consent of the parties concerned; and that it is as inconceivable, that God should enter into covenant with men, without their personal consent, as that they should enter into covenant with each other, without their personal consent. We have dwelt the longer on the general nature of covenanting, because it seems to lie at the foundation of the present dispute. And if the observations we have made are just, they may throw light on the particular covenants to be considered in the following sections.

S E C T. II.

The covenant of grace precisely stated.

THE gospel promises eternal life to all who believe in the Mediator. This gracious proposal which God makes to sinners, comprises all the essential properties of the covenant of grace. It concerns two parties. It requires the mutual consent of two parties. It contains a condition to be fulfilled on the one side, and a promise to be performed on the other. And both the promise and condition are founded in grace. When God makes this gracious proposal to sinners, he requires their immediate acceptance. But so long as they refuse to accept, they have no right to the blessing offered. For the covenant of grace, like all other

covenants, must have the sanction of mutual consent, before it can mutually bind the parties concerned. The sinner must believe in Christ, before he can claim the promise of eternal life. But the first exercise of faith confirms the covenant, and gives the believer an infallible title to the kingdom of heaven. If he should lose his reason or his life the next moment after believing, he would be secure in the favor of God. This representation of the covenant of grace, perfectly accords with Christ's own representations of it. He says, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Again he declares, "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, *hath* everlasting life, and *shall not come into condemnation.*" And again, in his last commission to the Apostles and to their successors in the ministry, he commands them to propose the covenant of grace to all, in these plain and comprehensive terms. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved : But he that believeth not shall be damned." According to this infallible definition of the covenant of grace, it contains neither more nor less, than *the promise of God to save sinners, through faith in the Mediator.* And agreeably to this definition, every minister may preach, and every person may argue, without being exposed to error.

S E C T. III.

The covenant of grace distinguished from the covenant of redemption.

THE work of redemption was devised before the foundation of the world. The three sacred persons in the ever blessed Trinity, mutually agreed, that each of them should bear a distinct part in carrying into execution their wise and gracious purposes respecting man. And this eternal mutual compact or agreement between the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is

what we mean, and what is commonly understood, by the covenant of redemption. Now between this, and the covenant of grace, there is a wide difference. This will appear if we compare them in a few particulars. The covenant of grace subsists between God and believers; but the covenant of redemption subsists between the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The covenant of grace was made in time; but the covenant of redemption was made from eternity. Man has a part to perform in the covenant of grace; but man has no part to perform in the covenant of redemption. Besides, the covenant of grace is the fruit of the covenant of redemption. It was in consequence of the eternal purpose of the ever blessed Trinity to save sinners, and of the absolute certainty of Christ's fulfilling his part in the covenant of redemption, that God could, immediately after the fall, promise to save sinners, through faith in a Saviour to come. This great diversity between these two covenants, renders it highly necessary to keep them distinct in our own minds, and especially when we pretend to argue from either of them.

S E C T. IV.

The covenant of Abraham, though founded on, yet distinct from, the covenant of grace.

THESE two covenants are so nearly and necessarily connected, that they are often considered as one and the same covenant. But if we carry in our minds the definition which has been given of the covenant of grace, we shall find that it does, by no means, apply to the covenant of Abraham. This shows, that there must be some distinction between the covenant which God made with Abraham in particular, and the covenant of grace which he makes with believers in general. And in treating the subject before us, it becomes very necessary to point out the peculiar properties of the covenant of Abraham, by which

it is distinguished from the covenant of grace. What is commonly called the Abrahamic covenant, is summarily contained in the xviith chapter of Genesis, from the first to the twenty fift verse. Between this and the covenant of grace, several points of difference may be easily observed.

1. Faith is the condition of the covenant of grace : but circumcision was the principal condition of the covenant of Abraham. When God proposed the covenant to him, he proposed circumcision as the condition of it. Verse 10, "This is my covenant, which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy seed after thee; every man child among you shall be circumcised." This condition, peculiar to the covenant of Abraham, distinguishes it from the covenant of grace.

2. The covenant of grace respects the believer only; but the covenant of Abraham chiefly and ultimately respected his posterity. So it is said verse 7. "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, *and thy seed after thee*, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant." Agreeably to this representation, we find a number of very singular and important blessings, which God promised to bestow upon Abraham's seed as a fulfilment of his covenant with *him*. In particular.

1. God engaged to distinguish Isaac and his seed from Ishmael and his seed. So we read, verse 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st. "And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee ! And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed, and thou shalt call his name Isaac; And I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee; behold I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly : Twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. *But my covenant will I establish with Isaac*, which Sarah shall bear unto thee." This promise has been visibly fulfilled from age to age, in the continued separation between the Jews and Ishmaelites.

2. God engaged in his covenant with Abraham, to give his seed in the line of Isaac, the land of Canaan for a perpetual possession. Verse 8. "And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession." Agreeably to this article in the covenant, God did, at the time appointed, deliver the seed of Abraham from their bondage in Egypt, and carry them through the wilderness to the land of promise. When God appeared to Moses, and told him that he was about to deliver his people from their present burdens, and conduct them to a land flowing with milk and honey, he plainly intimates, that he was going to do this, in covenant faithfulness to Abraham. See Exod. iii. 6,—17. And we find a similar representation of the matter in Duet. i. 8. vii. 7, 8, 9. "Go in and possess the land which the Lord sware to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give unto them, and to their seed after them. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people: For ye were the fewest of all people: But because the Lord loved you, and *because he would keep the oath which he sware unto your fathers*, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bond-men, from the hand of Parah king of Egypt. Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, *the faithful God, which keepeth covenant* and mercy with them that love him, and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations." This same divine faithfulness, Nehemiah also acknowledges in a devout address to God. Neh. ix. 7, 8. "Thou art the Lord God, who didst choose Abram, and broughtest him out of Ur of the Chaldees, and gavest him the name of Abraham: And foundest his heart faithful before thee, and madest a covenant with him, to give the land of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give it, I say, to his seed, and hast performed thy words, for thou art righteous." Such a donation of the land of Canaan to Abraham's

seed; clearly distinguishes the covenant of grace which extends to the believer only, without any respect to his present or future offspring.

3. God engaged, in his covenant with Abraham, to raise up the Messiah from one branch of his family. So the Apostle expressly tells us, Gal. iii, 16. "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many: But as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." This article stipulated in the covenant, God faithfully fulfilled. For it is evident from the genealogy recorded by Matthew and Luke, that our Lord sprang from the line of Abraham. Here is another mark of distinction between the covenant of Abraham and the covenant of grace.

4. God promised to the father of the faithful, to keep up the visible church, and maintain a constant succession of pious men, in his family, until the appearance of the promised Messiah. Verse 7. "I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant; *to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee—And in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.*" Chap. xii. 3. Accordingly we find, that God did set up the church, and maintain a constant succession of pious men, in Abraham's family, until the appearance of the Son of God in the flesh. Simeon, Anna, and others, were waiting for the consolation of Israel, when Christ was born, and publicly devoted to God, according to his own institution. And after the Jews were cut off for unbelief, God continued the visible church, and made the spiritual seed of Abraham succeed in the place of his natural posterity, so as to fulfil the promise, that in him all the families of the earth should be blessed. The blessings of Abraham have come upon the Gentiles, and we are now enjoying the happy effects of the divine faithfulness to Abraham. Thus it appears, that the covenant of Abraham ought to be considered as totally distinct from the covenant of grace.

S E C T. V.

Sinai covenant, though founded on, yet distinct from, the covenant of grace.

[Here Mr. Emmons lays before the reader, 'scripture evidence that God required, and the Israelites made a *credible profession of real godliness*, when they entered into the Sinai covenant.' He brings many plain scriptures, but I must content myself with mentioning only his sixth argument.]

6. THE Israelites were finally broken off from the Sinai covenant, by unbelief. This the apostle shows at large in the eleventh of Romans. But how could they have been broken off by unbelief, if that covenant had not implied their profession of faith in the promised Messiah? If they had **never** professed to believe in a Saviour to come, then their rejecting him after he appeared, could have been no violation of their covenant obligations, nor consequently any just cause of their being cast out of covenant. But if they had publicly and solemnly professed to believe in the promised Messiah, then their visible rejection of Christ in the days of his flesh, was a visible evidence of their breach of covenant; and a sufficient ground for God to disown them, and cast them out of his vineyard. The manner, therefore, of their being cut off from the Sinai covenant clearly shows, that before they were cut off, they were considered and treated as true believers or real saints.

I proceed to show, as I proposed, that this covenant was distinct from the covenant of grace; or God's promise to save sinners, through faith in the Mediator. Though this might be argued from the various points of difference which have been mentioned, yet I shall suggest but only two considerations, which appear to be decisive on this head.

1. The covenant of grace existed about two thousand years *before* the Sinai covenant. God proposed the covenant of grace immediately after the fall. And many, in every age, from Adam to Moses, complied

with it, and secured its spiritual and eternal blessings. Indeed Moses, and Aaron, and all the pious Israelites, who had lived in Egypt, entered into the covenant of grace before they came to mount Sinai. So that the Sinai covenant must have been distinct from the covenant of grace. Besides,

2. The covenant of grace has existed near two thousand years since the Sinai covenant was dissolved. The Apostle Paul, in his epistles to the Romans, Galatians, and Ephesians, largely proves, that the Mosaic dispensation ceased at the death of Christ. And Christ himself intimated, that this should be the consequence of his fulfilling the law. But the covenant of grace has been in full force, ever since, as well as before, the abrogation of the Sinai covenant. These two considerations seem to put it beyond all doubt, that the Sinai covenant was distinct from the covenant of grace. The Sinai covenant was calculated for a particular people, time, and place; but the covenant of grace is calculated for all nations, times and places, from the fall of man to the day of judgment.

Before I conclude this chapter, I would make a few remarks upon what has been said, in order to illustrate more fully the covenant we have been considering, as well as the general subject, upon which we are professedly treating.

Remark 1. The foregoing observations may show us, why God owned and treated the Jews as his peculiar people, when they revolted from him, and became extremely corrupt. This was owing to his double relation to the seed of Abraham. In his covenant with Abraham, he engaged to preserve and bless his seed. And, therefore, notwithstanding they personally broke their covenant with him, yet he continued to distinguish them, with outward blessings on their father's account. He often treated them better than *their* conduct, or *his* covenant relation to them required. Though he uniformly smiled on them when they were obedient, yet he did not uniformly punish them, when they were disobedient. He delayed for many ages to cut

them off from his covenant after they had deserved to be cut off, and dispersed among the nations. This was not because he meant to reward their outward conduct and graceless duties; but because he meant to keep covenant with Abraham. While Abraham lived, he faithfully kept covenant with God. And since his death, God has faithfully fulfilled his covenant with him, by preserving and blessing his seed.

Remark 2. It appears from what has been said in this chapter, that the covenant of grace has always been the same. It is a covenant in which God engages to save sinners through faith in the Mediator. This covenant we have seen is founded on the covenant of redemption, and designed to carry it into execution, and therefore must remain the same, until the design of the covenant of redemption is completed. Accordingly the scripture represents men's being saved through faith in the Mediator, from the fall of Adam to the coming of Christ, and from the coming of Christ to the end of time. None of the covenants which we have been considering, had any tendency to alter the covenant of grace. The covenant of redemption was the foundation of the covenant of grace; and the covenant of grace was the foundation of the covenant of Abraham and of the Sinai covenant; and it is plain, that the covenant of grace could not be altered by a covenant upon which it was built, nor by those which were built upon it.

Remark 3. The preceding observations may teach us what we are to understand by the different *dispensations* of the covenant of grace. Some seem to make no distinction between the covenant of grace, and its different dispensations, in different ages. The first dispensation commenced with Adam, the second with Abraham, the third with Moses, and the fourth with Christ. These different dispensations of the covenant of grace, are often mentioned, referred to, and reasoned from, without being explained. But, perhaps, it may be of service to explain them. As the covenant

of grace has always been precisely the same, so there has been nothing in the covenant itself to distinguish it, from time to time, or to mark its different dispensations. These, therefore, must be certain things, which are distinct from the essence of the covenant, and which may be properly called its *appendages*. The covenant of grace, simply considered, requires only faith in the Mediator: But God has been pleased, at different times, to enjoin other duties besides faith in Christ, upon those who embrace the covenant of grace. And these duties may be called its appendages, as they are enjoined wholly on the ground of it. From Adam to Abraham the appendages of the covenant of grace were plain and simple, and such as naturally resulted from it. God required believers to offer sacrifices, to profess religion, to attend public worship, and to form churches or religious societies. These particulars, it is true, are not distinctly mentioned in the sacred history of those early times; but yet perhaps they may be fairly collected from it. Those before the flood certainly built altars, and offered sacrifices in public. The sons of God were distinguished from the sons and daughters of men. Hence it is natural to conclude, that they made a public profession of religion, formed churches, and worshiped God in a public and social manner. These, or similar duties, enjoined upon those who entered into the covenant of grace, were the appendages, by which its first dispensation was distinguished. In Abraham's day, another peculiar duty was added, which formed the second dispensation of the covenant of grace. This duty was the rite of circumcision. God required Abraham and his seed after him, from generation to generation, to circumcise their male children, at eight days old, and all their proselytes, whenever they admitted them to their own peculiar privileges. This divine institution continued to distinguish the second dispensation of the covenant of grace, until the days of Moses, when the third commenced. Then God made the Sinai covenant with the seed of

Abraham, and gave them a large code of new laws, rites and ceremonies, in addition to all the foregoing appendages of the covenant of grace. And as this illustrious dispensation was principally designed to prepare the way for the coming of Christ, so it continued until Christ appeared and made complete atonement for sin. Then the fourth and last dispensation of the covenant of grace commenced, and set aside all those appendages of it, which were typical of the promised Messiah, and which served to distinguish the seed of Abraham from the rest of the world. Instead of the sacrifices under the three first dispensations, instead of circumcision and the passover under the second dispensation, and instead of all the civil and ceremonial precepts under the third, Christ required his followers only to profess religion, to unite in religious societies, to submit to the ordinance of baptism, and to celebrate the memorials of his own death. These few plain and simple duties are the appendages of the covenant of grace, under its last and most perfect dispensation. Thus it appears that the different dispensations of the covenant of grace are not different modes, or forms, or articles of the covenant itself; but only different duties added to it, or founded upon it, which become binding in consequence of embracing the covenant. And these duties are properly termed appendages, because they have been added to and taken from the covenant, without making the least alteration in it.

This account of the appendages of the covenant of grace, seems to be fully confirmed by Doctor Hemmenway himself, who very justly mentions and describes the duties which are enjoined on believers in particular, in consequence of their embracing the covenant of grace. He says, page 11th, "Some precepts of the gospel are immediately directed to all to whom the call of the gospel is sent, and demand present obedience. *But others are immediately directed to those who are in or under the special bond of the covenant, and cannot be regularly obeyed by any but those who are first admitted in-*

to the number of God's people, by a stipulation or consent. When they have thus taken the bond of the covenant on them, there are *further duties* immediately enjoined, duties which *belong not* to those who are not in covenant *while such*, particularly *using the special ordinances*, which are *appropriated exclusively* to the church." Such duties can be no other than proper appendages of the covenant of grace, and ought to be considered in this light.

Remark 4. It appears from what has been said, that there is no propriety in arguing from one dispensation of the covenant of grace to another. Though the covenant of grace has always been the same, yet one dispensation of it has superceded another. Therefore, we cannot determine what are the peculiar duties of believers under the present dispensation of the covenant of grace, from what were the peculiar duties of believers under any of its former dispensations. Doctor Hemmenway has followed other writers in arguing from the former dispensations of the covenant of grace to the present, and endeavoured to prove what the peculiar duties of believers are under the present dispensation of the covenant of grace, from what they were under its former dispensations. But this mode of reasoning is by no means conclusive. It was the duty of believers under former dispensations of the covenant of grace, to offer sacrifices ; But can we hence infer, that this is their duty now ? It was the duty of believers under former dispensations of the covenant of grace, to circumcise their children and attend the pass-over ; But does it hence follow, that those duties are still binding ? Or can we justly conclude, that it is the duty of believers now to circumcise their children, or even to baptize them, because it *was once* their duty to circumcise them ? The truth is, we must learn the peculiar duties of believers under the present dispensation of the covenant of grace, from the dispensation itself, which enjoins all the peculiar duties which belong to it. If believers are now to baptize their chil-

dren, as undoubtedly they are*, it is not because they were once obliged to circumcise them. If believers are now to attend the Lord's supper, it is not because they were once obliged to attend the passover. The reasoning from the appendages of the covenant of grace, instead of the covenant itself, has been a fruitful source of error among christians. The Papists plead that there ought to be priests, and bishops, and a pope at the head of all, in the christian church, because there were the levities, the priests, and the high priests, in the Jewish church. The Episcopalians found their practice of wearing sacerdotal robes in the discharge of their ministerial office, on the custom of the Jewish clergy, in wearing robes for ornament and for beauty. And the congregationalists reason on the same ground, in support of the duty of unregenerate men to attend the christian sacraments. But all this reasoning is inconclusive; whether what they mean to prove by it be true or false. We have no right to argue from past appendages of the covenant of grace, which have been set aside, to the present appendages of it. The christian dispensation, which is allowed to be the freest from types and figures, plainly speaks for itself. And we ought to look into the clear dispensation of the gospel, in order to discover the peculiar duties of believers, at this day. By pursuing this method, we may, perhaps, avoid some of the darkness and confusion, which has attended the sacramental controversy in particular.

CHAPTER III.

None but real saints in the covenant of grace.

DOCTOR Hemmenway supposes, that not only true believers, but all who are baptized, are, in some sense, in the covenant of grace. But if we have

* He has no where offered to give us any reason, why infants should be baptized.

given a just definition of the covenant of grace, then none can be in it but true believers. The covenant of grace, we have said, is, "The promise of God to save sinners, on the condition of their believing in Christ." According to this definition, believing in Christ is the sole condition of the covenant of grace, and therefore all who believe in the Mediator, comply with the condition, and so are not partly, or in some sense, but completely in covenant with God. If faith is the condition of the covenant of grace, there can be no medium between being completely in and completely out of it. The believer is completely in it, and the unbeliever is completely out of it. The believer is entitled to all the blessings of it, and the unbeliever to none. All the promises of God are *in Christ*, yea and amen. Believers are *in Christ*, and therefore all the promises apply to them. Unbelievers are *out of Christ*, and strangers from the covenant of promise, and therefore have no title to covenant blessings.

The only way to avoid the force of this argument is to suppose, that men may be true believers in the sense of the covenant of grace, without being true saints, or the subjects of real holiness. But this supposition is contradicted by the whole tenor of scripture. It is said, "As many as received Christ, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; Which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man but of God." It is said, "Whoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." It is said, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." And it is also said, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, *faith*." These texts fully prove, that saving faith, which is the condition of the covenant of grace, is the fruit of the Spirit, and exercised by real saints only, or those who have been born of God. According to scripture, therefore, none but real saints are, in any sense, in the covenant of grace. Though sinners, who have never been renewed, may believe, in speculation, that

the gospel is divine, that Christ is the only Saviour, that all who embrace him from the heart shall be saved; and though they may profess to believe in Christ, and really hope to obtain eternal life, yet they are not in the covenant of grace, nor entitled to any of its blessings.

CHAPTER IV.

None are required to profess religion but real saints, who are in the covenant of grace.

WE have shown, in the last chapter, that none but real saints are in covenant with God. We are now to enquire, whether he requires any but those who are in covenant with him, to make a public profession of religion. There is a distinction between moral and instituted duties. Moral duties result from the nature of things, and are binding previous to a divine command; but instituted duties derive their obligation from the expression of divine authority. Thus to love God is a moral duty, but *to profess to love him* is an instituted duty. In order, therefore, to determine who are bound to *profess* to love God, we must enquire on whom this duty is enjoined. And since saints are essentially different from sinners, it is natural to suppose, that God should require peculiar duties of saints, which are expressive of their peculiar obligations and affections. They have been made the subjects of his special grace. They have been admitted into covenant with him. They have devoted themselves to his service. And they truly feel a supreme affection and attachment to his character and interest. He may, therefore, with propriety, require them to express the genuine feelings of their hearts, by an open profession of real godliness.

Philip required the eunuch to profess saving faith, before he admitted him to baptism. And though this

is a single instance of requiring a true believer to profess religion previous to baptism; yet since Philip acted, in this instance, agreeably to Christ's last commission to his Apostles and their successors in the ministry, we may safely conclude, that all real saints are as much required to profess religion as to submit to the ordinance of baptism. And, indeed, these duties stand upon the same foundation, and are inseparably connected, in Christ's commission to his ministers. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." This commission renders a public profession of religion a divine institution under the gospel. For it requires ministers to preach, and men to believe; and believers to profess their faith, and ministers to baptize them, on the ground of their profession.

Though God requires all where the gospel comes, to comply with the covenant of grace; yet so long as any neglect to comply, he does not require them to profess that they have complied. If God should require men to profess religion before they have it, he would require them to profess a falsehood. But since this is inconsistent with the divine character, we may be assured that none but the real subjects of grace are required to make a public profession of real godliness. God makes the same distinction in precepts as in promises. As he promises life to none but real saints; so he requires none but real saints to profess religion. If sinners suppose *they are real saints*, yet God does not promise them life on that supposition. So if any suppose they love God while they are destitute of love, yet God does not require them to profess the love of which they are destitute. As the promise in the one case, so the precept in the other, is given to saints only. The profession of religion is properly an appendage of the covenant of grace, and therefore is enjoined on those only who are in the covenant of grace. God's requisitions depend, not on the false opinions, but on the real characters of men. He requires only those

who have religion, to profess religion, and distinguish themselves from the rest of the world. But I shall not enlarge on this point, since it has been abundantly proved by Mr. Edwards, and is freely acknowledged by Doctor Hemmenway. He says, page 20, "The belief of the heart is presupposed in the profession of the mouth. And a profession of faith which is a duty, goes before a right of admission to the special ordinances and privileges of external communion in an instituted church." And again, page 11, "Some precepts of the gospel are immediately directed to all to whom the call of the gospel is sent, and demand present obedience. But others are immediately directed to those who are in or under the special bond of the covenant." A public profession of religion properly belongs to this class of duties.

CHAPTER V.

Visible saints described.

IT is a given point, that all *visible saints* are proper subjects of special ordinances. If it could only be determined, therefore, who are visible saints, one part of the present controversy would be completely settled. But this has never been done; though it is probable, that all men have precisely the same ideas upon this subject. Different writers have described visible saints very differently. Doctor Hemmenway, indeed, differs from all who have gone before him in this dispute. He says, page 41, "It is *external*, and not *internal* holiness which forms the character of a visible saint, *as such*." Again, "It must be the *visibility* of that holiness which is *visible*, that is, of *external* holiness, which denominates a visible saint." According to this description, a visible saint is any person who bears the mere resemblance of a real saint. But the mere resemblance of an object, is never taken for the object itself. The picture of a dove is the resemblance

of a dove, and the picture of a man is the resemblance of a man. But whoever took the picture of a dove, for a real dove? Or the picture of a man, for a real man? Should a person go into a painter's apartment, which is covered with pictures of rational and irrational creatures, would he say when he came out, that he had seen a multitude of men and animals? Though images bear a still nearer resemblance of certain objects, yet they are never supposed to be, the real objects, whose resemblance they bear. When Cesar saw the statue of Alexander, did he imagine he saw Alexander himself? When the Papist bows before the image of Christ, does he take the image to be the real person, who expired on the cross?

Now a person who bears the mere resemblance of a saint, is no more a *visible* saint, than the image of a man is a *visible* man. We find men every where, who believe the Bible is the word of God, who attend public worship and family prayer, and who live externally sober, honest, exemplary lives. These men, in all these respects, bear the resemblance of real saints. But this resemblance does not constitute them *visible* saints. For all their orthodoxy and morality may be the fruit of mere education, or of a desire to appear well in the eyes of the world. And we have no reason to believe, that they are governed by any better motives than these, unless they give us some other evidence of real holiness. But if those who bear the mere resemblance of real saints are not *visible* saints; then the question still returns, Who are?

I answer, those who *appear to profess real holiness*. This all must allow. For however they may describe *visible* saints, yet they cannot believe any to be of this character, unless they appear, in their view, to be *real* saints. Of this there is a short and easy proof. Let any man, who has been considered as a *visible* saint, only exhibit clear evidence of being wholly destitute of real holiness, and he will immediately cease to be a *visible* saint. Judas was once a *visible* saint. All his

fellow disciples viewed him in this light. But did they view him so, after he had betrayed his Master? By no means. This instance of his conduct fully convinced them, that he was totally destitute of love to Christ, and immediately transformed him, in their view, from a *visible* saint to a *visible* sinner.

If it be true, that a *visible* saint is one who *appears to profess real holiness*, then it only remains to inquire who exhibit this appearance. And here it is evident, that none but those who exhibit a good life, a good creed, and a good profession, exhibit the appearance of real holiness. For,

1. Though a good life does not prove the heart to be good, yet a bad life proves the heart to be bad. Whoever, therefore, exhibits a vicious life, exhibits a vicious heart, which is totally inconsistent with the appearance of saving grace.

2. No man can appear to be a real saint, who does not appear to believe the fundamental doctrines of the gospel. Though the bare belief of these doctrines does not prove any man to be a saint, yet the denial of them proves him to be destitute of the love of the truth, which is inconsistent with real holiness. A good creed, therefore, is as necessary as a good life, in order to constitute a *visible* saint.

3. None can appear to be real saints, who do not profess to have that love which is the essence of true religion. Love is the fulfilling of the law. And love belongs to the heart. The heart, therefore, is the seat of all holy affections. But every man is best acquainted with his own heart, and if he is honest, can give us the best evidence of his inward views and feelings, by his own declaration. And this renders the profession of real holiness, or vital piety, absolutely necessary, in order to constitute a *visible* saint. A good life and a good confession of faith are only negative evidence of saving grace. But there ought to be some positive evidence that the heart is right with God. And this can be exhibited no otherwise, than by a pro-

fession of those exercises of heart, which constitute a real saint. For however moral and orthodox a man may appear, yet if he says that he has no love to God, no repentance of sin, no delight in holiness, we have no right to say or believe that he is a real saint, and of consequence, he cannot be a *visible* saint. But if a man be moral and orthodox, and in addition to his good life and his good confession of faith, seriously declares, according to his best judgment of his own heart, that he loves God, hates sin, and delights in holiness, he then appears to be a real saint, which is precisely the same as a visible saint. Thus morality, orthodoxy, and a profession of that in which true holiness consists, constitute visible saints. And though some things which Doctor Hemmenway says, seem to contradict this description of visible saints; yet he says other things, which perfectly agree with it and confirm it. These are his own words, page 62, 63. "If by a profession of godliness we mean such a profession as gives evidence of christian piety, as being the proper expression of the faith and holiness required in the gospel in order to salvation; this I think should be exhibited in order to admission into an instituted church. There should be a credible profession of assent to the foundation principles of the christian doctrine, of consent to the new covenant; and that without known hypocrisy or reserve. In a word, *a profession expressive of the faith, temper, and resolutions of a true christian*, as described in the gospel. If this be what is meant by those who require a profession of godliness, or saving faith as a term of christian communion; this is no more than what Mr. Stoddard has also declared as his steadfast persuasion." This passage favours the sentiment advanced in the beginning of this chapter, *that probably all men have precisely the same idea of visible saints, as contrasted with real saints*. Though they may differ in their ideas of real saints, yet they must all agree, that *visible* saints are those who appear to be *real* saints.

CHAPTER VI.

The right of admission to full communion.

THE duty of admission, and the duty of access to special ordinances, are distinct duties, which require a distinct consideration. In this chapter, I shall confine myself to the duty of admission. And here the question is, Whether the church may admit any to communion, but such as appear to be real saints? I know some object against using the phrase, *appear to be saints*, as though it carried the idea, that the church may make their own fancy, instead of real evidence of grace, the rule of admission. But there seems to be no just ground for this objection. For, if the church are to judge of the qualifications of those whom they admit to communion, they are to judge according to *apparent* evidence. Evidence which they do not see, is no evidence to them. Supposing they are so blinded by prejudice, with respect to a certain person, that they cannot discover the evidence which he really exhibits of being a good man; yet so long as the blindness of *their* hearts prevents their seeing the goodness of *his*, they ought not to admit him to communion. Their first duty is to cast the beam out of their own eye, and impartially attend to the evidence of grace, which the proponent exhibits, and then receive him in the Lord as becometh saints. God has made it the duty of the church to admit those to special ordinances, who appear to be real saints. The church, therefore, must act according to the evidence of grace, which they discern in those who offer themselves for admission. If they appear to them to be real saints, they ought to admit them; but if they appear to them to be destitute of grace, they ought to reject them. God has given his rules to imperfect creatures. It is to be expected, therefore, that a church may, through inadvertence, prejudice, or partiality, admit some to communion, and

debar others from it, whom they ought not. But yet their guilt will not consist in acting according to the evidence which they do see, but in not attending to the evidence which they might see. Their duty is to attend to evidence with impartiality, and to act according to it. And this shows that they must admit those, and only those, to communion, whom they think are real saints. They are not required to act on certainty, but on probability, because they cannot look into the hearts of men. They must have evidence enough to convince them, that the man whom they admit, is more likely to be a true believer than a false professor. No evidence short of probability, can justify them in admitting any person to full communion. If a Cashier must have any evidence, that each piece of money which he receives is genuine; then he must have evidence enough to convince him, that each piece is more likely to be genuine than counterfeit. Or if a Mustermaster must have any evidence, that each soldier whom he admits into the army is sound, then he must have evidence enough to convince him, that each soldier is more likely to be sound than unsound. These cases directly apply to the subject in hand. God requires the church to admit sound and none but sound believers to communion, so far as they are capable of judging, by the rules which he has given them to govern their conduct. It is their duty, therefore, to apply those rules to every particular person with candor; and to receive or reject him; accordingly as he appears to them, either qualified or unqualified for admission. They are not required to be infallible, but they are required to be honest. And to be honest, they must admit none to their christian fellowship, but those whom they charitably think are more likely to be friends, than enemies to God. But since this is one of the cardinal points in the present dispute, it may be proper to offer a few plain arguments to establish it.

ARGUMENT I.

None ought to be admitted into the visible church but such as appear qualified to promote the end of its institution.

The visible church is a religious society, founded on religious principles, and designed to promote religious purposes. Such a society God instituted immediately after the fall, and has preserved in the world, from age to age, to the present day. It appears from the nature of this society, as well as from the representations of it in scripture, that it is calculated to answer a variety of important ends. In particular, to distinguish the friends from the enemies of God ; to display the beauty and importance of religion ; and to propagate it among mankind to the latest generations. These valuable purposes are happily represented by a very sensible writer.*

“ A visible church was established, in order to continue it, and carry it on successively throughout all ages. Had Moses and the Prophets, Christ and his Apostles, only taught, and by miracles proved, religion to their cotemporaries ; the benefits of their instructions would have reached but to a small part of mankind. Christianity must have been, in a great degree, sunk and forgot in a few ages. To prevent this, appears to have been one reason, why a visible church was instituted ; to be like a city upon a hill, a standing memorial to the world of the duty which we owe to our Maker ; to call men continually, both by example and instruction, to attend to it ; and by the form of religion ever before their eyes, remind them of the reality ; to be the repository of the Oracles of God ; to hold up the light of Revelation in aid to that of nature, and propagate it throughout all generations to the end of the world.”

Now, if the visible church be a society designed to

* Bishop Butler.

answer these religious purposes, then it is easy to perceive who are properly qualified to be admitted as members of it. The ends for which any society is formed, naturally point out the proper qualifications of its members. A society for the promotion of learning, should be composed of men of learning. And for the same reason, a society for the promotion of religion, should be composed of men of religion. Saints love God, but sinners hate him. Saints love the cause of God, but sinners wish to destroy it. Saints love sinners, in one view, and hate them in another, but sinners are totally opposed to saints. This contrariety between saints and sinners is abundantly asserted in scripture. Solomon asserts, that an unjust man is an abomination to the just; "and he that is upright in the way is an abomination to the wicked." Christ forewarns his followers of the spirit of the world towards them. "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; If they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me." Agreeably to this Paul declares, "The carnal mind is enmity against God: For it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." And again he says to the Galatians, "Now we brethren, as Isaac was, are children of the promise. But as then, he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now." Thus the whole world are divided into saints and sinners, who are diametrically opposed to each other. Saints are friends to God and to his kingdom; but sinners are opposed to God and to his kingdom, and to all who wish to promote it.

hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; which is come unto you, as it is in all the world, and bringeth forth fruit as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth. He speaks with still stronger assurance, with respect to the Thessalonians. Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost. The Apostle Peter addresses professors in general as the subjects of saving grace, and entitled to the kingdom of heaven. Peter, an Apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Christ; grace unto you and peace be multiplied. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season (if need be) ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried in the fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ: Whom having not seen ye love, in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.

Paul and Peter here speak to all professors of religion, as though they judged them to be faithful to the Lord. They address them, just as they would address those whom they supposed to be real saints. And they express that charity towards them, which they might properly express towards persons professing godliness.

It is natural, therefore, to understand them as giving *their real opinion* of those whom they had baptized and admitted to special ordinances. But some insinuate that they are speaking only of the visible separation of Christians from Heathens, and call them holy, beloved, elected, sanctified, and saved; in allusion to the Jewish church, who were separated from other nations, and on that account stiled a holy people, a peculiar treasure, a kingdom of priests. This objection refutes itself. For the Jewish church were all real saints by profession, as we trust has been sufficiently proved. And if this has been proved, then the description of the Jewish church being applied to the Christian is a clear demonstration, that the Apostles considered the professors of christianity as real saints. The allusion which the Apostles are supposed to have to the Jewish church, fixes the meaning of their expressions, and obliges us to understand them in their highest and best sense.

Now, if the Apostles admitted none to the christian sacraments, but such as *they supposed* were chosen of God, called to be saints, predestinated to holiness, and entitled to the heavenly inheritance, then we may justly conclude, that none, at this day, ought to be admitted into the church, but such as the church suppose are real saints. The Apostles were governed, in the admission of members, by the same rule, which is given to all their successors in the ministry. Their rule was Christ's commission. And Christ's commission is the only rule of ministers at this day. The Apostles have explained Christ's commission, by their practice. And their practice is an infallible guide, since they acted, in all their public conduct, under the immediate direction of the divine Spirit. This argument drawn from the practice of the Apostles absolutely settles the point, that the church ought to admit none to the table of the Lord, but such as *they suppose*, in a judgment of charity, are true believers, or the subjects of saving grace.

CHAPTER VIII.

SECTION VII. and X.

The Doctor's opinion, that baptized infants belong to the visible church examined.

WE grant, that God may sanctify some baptized infants ; and we will not deny that he has absolutely engaged to sanctify them all, if their parents faithfully discharge their covenant obligations ; but yet we cannot allow, that baptized infants, whether sanctified or unsanctified, belong to the visible church. For,

1. They cannot belong to it, by virtue of their own act. They can neither make, nor accept any proposals. They are unacquainted with the name, nature, and obligation of a covenant. They do not so much as know, that a visible church exists. Such weak and ignorant creatures, therefore, cannot belong to the visible church, by virtue of their own act.

2. They cannot belong to it, by virtue of their parent's act. Believing parents may covenant with God *about* their infant seed, but *not for* them. They may engage to love them, to pray for them, to instruct them, to restrain them, and even to use every argument and motive which they can think of, to persuade and morally compel them to join the visible church. But yet they cannot, by these or any other methods, lay them under covenant obligations, to profess that they love God, when they are conscious to themselves, that they have not the love of God in them. Believing parents may lay *themselves* under covenant obligations to God, to their fellow men, and to their children, by virtue of their own act. But their own act of covenanting for *themselves*, can never lay *their children* under covenant obligations, to read, or pray, or attend public worship, or make a public profession of religion, or perform any other duty, whatsoever. It is true, in-

deed, the baptized children of faithful parents are under superior obligations to religion. But their superior obligations wholly result from their superior advantages for light and instruction, and not from any covenant obligations laid upon them, by their parents. Covenanting is a personal act. And no person can lay any one under covenant obligation but himself. There is no possibility, therefore, of believing parents bringing their infant seed into a visible church, which is a voluntary society, formed by a voluntary compact.

3. Baptized infants cannot belong to the visible church, by virtue of God's act. Those who consider the infants of believers as belonging to the visible church, generally suppose that they are brought into it, by the sovereign act of God. They suppose God takes them into covenant with himself, and gives them a standing in the visible church, by his own sovereign authority, without their knowledge or consent. This was the general opinion of the first churches in New-England. "They agreed, That the children of the faithful are church members, with their parents; and that their baptism was a seal of their being so."* And this seems to be the opinion of many at this day. But, in stating the nature of covenanting, we have endeavored to prove, that it lies not within the province even of divine sovereignty, to take any of the human race into covenant, without their own personal knowledge and consent. And if this be true, the undeniable consequence is, that no infants are brought into the visible church, by the sovereign act of God. The elegant and ingenious Writer we have frequently had occasion to mention, says indeed, that God has a sovereign right to take his reasonable creatures into covenant, whether they yield their consent or not. But he has said nothing to show *how* a covenant can be made by one party, in opposition to the consent of the other; nor *how* a divine command can constitute a

*Mather's Magnalia, page 19.

covenant obligation ; nor *how* any person can be bound to fulfil a promise or engagement which he never made. And until these things are shown, we shall conclude, that it is as easy to prove, that baptized infants are divines or philosophers, as to prove, that they are in covenant with God, and members of the visible church. Now, if we have made it appear, that the infant seed of believing parents are not members of the visible church, then Doctor Hemmenway's opinion on this head is completely refuted, and of consequence, all the arguments which he has drawn from it.

One other observation will conclude my remarks. The Doctor's Discourse directly tends to destroy the appearance of religion in the visible church. He intimates, that it is a natural consequence of what he maintains, that those who were baptized in their infancy may be admitted to communion, without a public confession of religion. He uses the term *recognize* instead of *admit*, when speaking of those coming to special ordinances who were baptized in their infancy. If such persons are only to be *recognized* as members of the visible church, then it necessarily follows, that they have a right to all the external privileges of it, without a *formal* admission. This inference Mr. Williams has drawn from the church-membership of baptized infants, in a Dialogue which he has lately published, and republished. And this very Dialogue Doctor Hemmenway has, in connection with a number of truly great and respectable names, recommended to the public notice and perusal. Mr. Williams's Dialogue is wholly designed to carry the Doctor's real scheme into practice. Let us suppose, therefore, that our churches should act upon the Doctor's scheme, as Mr. Williams has explained it, and receive to their communion all sober persons, who were baptized in their infancy, without a public profession of religion. Would not this practice bring many unqualified persons to the sacrament ? Are there not sober Arians, sober Socinians, sober Universalists, sober Deists, and even sober Scep-

tics? Are such persons as these properly qualified to unite with the people of God, in commemorating the dying love of the Divine Redeemer? But what can exclude such from the table of the Lord, if no public profession of religion be required, in order to their *recognition* as members of the church in full communion? And when the church is composed of such unchristian characters, what appearance of religion will it exhibit to the world!

Though our venerable forefathers allowed, that baptized infants belong to the visible church, yet they would not admit even such, at adult age, to come to the sacrament, without a public relation of experiences, as well as a public profession of religion. Doctor Cotton Mather says, in his *Memoirs of the Life of the reverend John Eliot*, that “the churches of *New-England* have usually been very strict in their admission to *church-fellowship*, and required very signal demonstrations of a *repenting* and *believing* soul, before they thought men fit subjects to be intrusted with *the rights of the kingdom of Heaven*.” He says, page 188, it was Mr. Eliot’s opinion, that “the subjects to be admitted to church-fellowship, ought to be such as a *trying charity*, or a *charitable trial*, should pronounce *regenerate*.” And again he says, that Mr. Eliot “could not comprehend, that a church-state can arise from any other *formal cause*, but the consent, concurrence, confederation of those concerned in it; he looked upon a relation unto a church, as not a *natural*, or a *violent*, but a *voluntary* thing, and so that it is to be entered no otherwise than by an holy *covenant*, or as the scripture speaks, by *giving ourselves first unto the Lord, and then one unto another*.”

But we shall have the best evidence of the real opinion of our pious ancestors on the subject before us, from “the Answer of the Elders and other Messengers of the Churches, assembled at Boston, in the year 1662,

to the Questions propounded to them, by order of the Honored General Court." In the fourth proposition of the answer to the first question, we have their opinion clearly stated, respecting the propriety of admitting persons to the Lord's table, by virtue of their infant church-membership. The fourth proposition says, "These adult persons are not therefore to be admitted to full communion, merely because they *are* and *continue* members, without such further qualifications as the Word of God requireth thereunto. In the Old Testament, though men did continue members of the church, yet for ceremonial uncleanness they were to be kept from full communion in holy things, Lev. vii. 20, 21. Num. ix. 6, 7. and xix. 13—20. Yea, and the priests and levites in the Old Testament, had special charge committed to them, that men *should not partake in holy things*, unless duly qualified for the same, notwithstanding their *membership*, 2 Chron. xxiii. 19. Ezek. xxii. 26. and xlv. 7, 8, 9, 23. And therefore much more in these times, where moral fitness and spiritual qualifications are wanting, *membership alone*, is not sufficient for full communion. More was required to adult persons *eating the passover*, than mere MEMBERSHIP, therefore so there is now to the Lord's supper.*"

Though the first ministers in New-England, were great and good men, yet it appears from these quotations, that they adopted premises, from which they were afraid to draw the natural conclusions. But Doctor Hemmenway and Mr. Williams are more consistent. They maintain, that baptized infants are members of the visible church, and therefore conclude, that when they arrive to adult years, they ought to be *recognized* as members in full communion, without any public profession of religion. But did many of their admirers see this to be the necessary consequence of their Doctrine, respecting the church-membership of baptized infants, we presume, they would heartily reject

* Magnalia, B. v. p. 70.

it, as injurious both to the piety and purity of our churches. The Doctor, aware of this, but only once suggests his notion of recognition. And Mr. Williams, to save appearances, concedes that a public profession of religion may be admitted for a particular purpose.* But, however, he spends many pages to point out the expediency of laying the practice aside: Nor is he alone in this opinion. Many churches lay aside confessions of faith, and admit members without any public evidence of their belief of the essential doctrines of the gospel, and without any public evidence of their experimental acquaintance with religion. These are large strides towards that perfect liberty and catholicism, which the Doctor's Discourse, Mr. Williams's Dialogue, and the efforts of their respectable patrons, have a tendency to introduce into the present churches of Christ.

Is it not a very serious and important inquiry, Whether the church ought to open their arms so wide, as to take into their bosom, those who exhibit no appearance of religion, nor the least regard for the cause of God? If they lay aside a public profession of religion as a term of communion, they may expect to lose all brotherly love, all christian discipline, and all appearances of vital piety. And when they have lost all these distinguishing excellencies, they may expect to lose their influence over the minds of men, and fall under the reproach and contempt of the world. But on the other hand, if they steadfastly adhere to the directions of Christ and the example of our pious ancestors, in the admission of members, they may humbly hope, that God will visibly approve their fidelity, and add to their numbers daily such as shall be saved.

[So far Mr. Emmons.]

* Dialogue, Boston Edition, page 36, 37.

THUS, reader, you have had opportunity to peruse, and examine some of the reasonings of a judicious, sensible divine. Besides what is contained above, he has said, page 122. "Before we can admit—to partial communion we must find a scripture warrant to separate what God has joined together, namely, baptism and the Lord's supper. These ordinances, as they respect the adult, stand upon a level. And the qualifications for the one are the same as the qualifications for the other." And I will add, "These ordinances as they respect the" infant, "stand upon a level. And the qualifications for the one are the same as the qualification for the other." We have no more scripture for infant-baptism than for infant-communion—that is, none at all for either.

I cannot study what Mr. Emmons can advance in favour of infant-baptism. Other pædobaptists say, the covenant made with Abraham was the covenant of grace; and as he was required to circumcise his children, we ought to baptize ours. But Mr. Emmons says, "that the covenant of Abraham ought to be considered as totally distinct from the covenant of grace." And again, "That there is no propriety in arguing from one dispensation of the covenant of grace to another." He says, "The truth is we must learn the peculiar duties of believers under the present dispensation of the covenant of grace, from the dispensation itself, which enjoins all the peculiar duties which belong to it. If believers are now to baptize their children—it is not because they were once obliged to circumcise them."

Other pædobaptists say, infants were formerly included with their parents in the visible church, and therefore they ought to be now; and if so, then they ought to be baptized. But Mr. Emmons says, "God required, and the Israelites made a credible profession of real godliness, when they entered into the Sinai covenant." And again, he says, "We cannot allow, that baptized infants, whether sanctified or un sanctified, belong to the visible church."

Now as his penetrating genius and love of the truth have led him to remove the main pillars, which have for many years supported infant-baptism, notwithstanding all the displeasure, which he undoubtedly knew, he would incur from a great majority of the advocates for the practice ; I cannot but hope, he will soon be enabled to get this human tradition itself quite out of the way ; and that he may become as staunch an advocate for baptism only on a profession of faith, as he now is for communion only in that way.

I have sometimes thought it probable, that I should have been a baptist years before I was, had it not been for an idea held up by some, namely, that God has graciously promised parents, if they will be *faithful* in the discharge of their duty towards their children, that he will certainly sanctify them ; or at least that they shall not die unregenerate.

But when I was brought to attend closely to the subject, I could not see, even if the idea were ever so well supported by scripture, that it would justify the baptizing of infants. Nay could we be sure respecting any infant, that he were certainly sanctified, and therefore *belonged to the universal invisible church*, even this would not justify us in baptizing him. Baptism is that by which, each one, who receives it, ought to make a personal profession of his faith in Christ : *it is the answer of a good conscience.*

Should any unbaptized adult give us ever so good evidence of his being a real saint ; but before baptism lose his senses, we should have no right to baptize him, although we believed him to be a saint, and truly in the covenant of grace : For no person, adult or infant, sanctified or un sanctified, in covenant or not, ought to be baptized, who does not understandingly submit to this gospel institution.

The members of every church ought cordially, by their prayers, to dedicate themselves and their children, and all that they have to God : and to watch over one another, and to see, as far as in them lies, that each

member lives in the habitual performance of all christian duties : particularly that every parent pray for and with his children, and endeavour to *bring them up in the nurture, and admonition of the Lord.*

And indeed the children of faithful parents, baptized or unbaptized, as they are favoured with a pious education, “ are under superior obligations to religion. But their superior obligations wholly result” (not from their baptism, if they have ever been baptised, but) “ from their superior advantages for light and instruction.”

From the preceding extracts it may be observed, that those congregational and presbyterian churches, which admit persons “ to come to the sacrament, without a *public relation of experiences*, as well as a public profession of religion ;” are much farther from the practice of the first settlers of New-England, than even the baptists themselves.

How many are the inventions of men ! Even of good men ! *Mr. Emmons* and *Mr. C. Strong* say, Infants are not members of the visible church, and “ that *no* covenant relation doth exist between God and children on account of their being the children of covenant, or believing parents ;” but that they ought UNDOUBTEDLY to be baptized on some other account.—*Dr. Hopkins* and *Dr. West* say, “ that the *seed* mentioned in the promise to Abraham respected and comprehended his natural posterity ;” and if parents dedicate their children to God, by baptism, as they ought ; taking hold of the covenant for them by faith ; and perform their duty towards them in other respects as they may, and as many parents have done ; their children shall certainly be saved ; and therefore the children of believing parents ought to be baptized : though they do not promise them the earthly Canaan.—*Dr. Lathrop* and *Mr. Williams* have some other scheme. And how many other schemes there are I know not : But one thing is evident ; If a house divided against itself cannot stand, infant-baptism must surely fall.

These gentlemen, mentioned above, are noted characters, whose followers are vastly numerous. And their different schemes are not barely different arguments brought to prove the same thing ; but they are directly opposite, one to the other.

In a few centuries after the apostles, professors of Christianity went down into Egyptian darkness ; but now for many years, they have been emerging from *that* darkness, and laying aside those superstitious practices, which were then introduced. But (*the high places*, ii. King. xv. 4.) infant-baptism is not yet removed. Perhaps all denominations (unless those in the *Valleys of Piedmont* may be an exception) have more or less of popery still cleaving to them. I will not except even the baptists. But our pædobaptist brethren certainly have something, which they are exceedingly perplexed how to maintain on protestant principles ; for the more they endeavour to prove infant-baptism from the BIBLE ALONE, the more dark and obscure it appears.

The advocates for infant-baptism, when they are driven from every other hold, generally fly to the following as their last refuge ; “ It is no where forbidden in the New Testament, therefore as Abraham was required to circumcise his children, we must baptize ours.” This is loose reasoning indeed. “ Abraham was commanded to circumcise his male infants on the eighth day ; therefore, without a command, we must baptize our infants, both male and female, sometime in infancy ; but it is no matter on what day.” Were they pleading for circumcision, and could they say, *It is no where abrogated in the New Testament*, this would have much more of the appearance of an argument.—Or were they pleading for the continuance of *Tithes*, they might say, “ Tithes were not of Moses, but of the fathers, Abraham gave tithes, and they were continued under the Mosaic dispensation, and they are not forbidden in the New Testament ; therefore people, ought at this day, to give a tenth part of all their

income to their ministers." This reasoning would not be half so bad.

As infant-baptism is not expressly named and forbidden in the *New Testament*, (any more than infant-communion) if it could only be found any where in the *Old*, the advocates for the practice might urge its continuance now, with nearly as much propriety, as *Mr. John Cotton* urged the killing of heretics.

Mr. Roger Williams one of the first settlers in the state of *Rhode-Island*, and who gave name to the town of *Providence*, was banished from *Massachusetts* for his religious sentiments. Some time after he published a book under the title of *The bloody Tenet of persecution for conscience sake*. *Mr. Cotton* wrote an answer to him, which he called, *The bloody Tenet washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb*. This was printed in *London* in 1647. To this *Mr. Williams* published a reply in 1651, intitled, *The bloody Tenet yet more bloody by Mr. Cotton's endeavour to wash it white*.

As *Mr. Williams* "pleaded that the civil sword was never appointed by Christ for an antidote or remedy in spiritual evils and dangers; *Mr. Cotton* denies it, and says, "It is evident the civil sword was appointed for remedy in this case, *Deut. xiii.* and appointed it was by that angel of God's presence, whom God promised to send with his people. *Exod. xxxiii. 2, 3.* "And that angel was Christ, whom they tempted in the wilderness. *1 Cor. x. 9.* Therefore it cannot truly be said, that the Lord Jesus never appointed the civil sword for a remedy in such a case: For he did expressly appoint it in the old testament; nor did he ever abrogate it in the new. The reason of the law (which is the life of the law) is of eternal force and equity in all ages. *Thou shalt surely kill him because he hath sought to thrust thee away from the Lord thy God*; this reason is moral, that is, of universal and perpetual equity to put to death any apostate seducing idolator, or heretic, *C. p. 66, 67.*" In *Backus's History of the Baptists in New-England*, Vol. 1. p. 165, 166.

The following passages are some of Mr. Ed. Smarden's gleanings: and they are here published as the Rev. JOHN WESLEY's testimony in favour of the Baptists.

"AS CERTAIN ALSO AS YOUR OWN POETS HAVE SAID."

St. Paul.

The following are GLEANINGS, gathered from Mr. WESLEY's Notes on the New Testament.

Mat. iii. 16. "LET our Lord's submitting to baptism, teach us an holy exactness in the observance of those institutions, which owe their obligation merely to a divine command. Surely thus it becometh all his followers to fulfil all righteousness."

Acts x. 47. "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost? He does not say they have the baptism of the spirit, therefore they do not need baptism with water; but, just the contrary, if they have received the spirit then baptize them with water."

How easily is this question decided, if we will take the word of God for our judge? Either men have received the Holy Ghost or not. If they have not, repent, faith God, and be baptized, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. If they have, if they are already baptized with the Holy Ghost, then who can forbid water?"

Rom. vi. 4. "We are buried with him—alluding to the antient manner of baptizing by IMMERSION—that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory—glorious power of the Father, so we also by the same power should rise again; and, as he lives a new life in Heaven, so we should walk in newness of life. This, says the Apostle, our very baptism represents to us."

The following are Gleanings from his Ecclesiastical History:

Century 1, Part ii. Chap. iv. Sect. i. "The rites, instituted by Christ himself, were only two, and these designed to continue to the end of the church here below, without ANY VARIATION. These rites were *baptism* and the *holy supper*, which are not to be considered as mere ceremonies, but also as ordinances, accompanied with a sanctifying influence upon the heart of true christians."

Cent. 1, Part ii. Chap. ii. Sect. v. "Nor, at first, was the distinction made between christians of a more, less, or perfect order, which took place afterwards. Whoever acknowledged Christ as the Saviour of Mankind, and made a solemn profession of his confidence in him, WAS IMMEDIATELY BAPTIZED, and received into the church."

Cent. 1, Part ii. Chap. iii. Sect. iv. "In the earliest times of the church, all who professed firmly to believe that Jesus was the only Redeemer of the world, and who, in consequence of this profession, promised to live in a manner conformable to the purity of his religion, were received among the disciples of Christ. This was all the preparation for *baptism* then required; and a more accurate instruction in the doctrines of christianity was to be administered to them after it."

Cent. 1, Part ii. Chap. iv. Sect. viii. "The sacrament of *baptism* was administered in this century, in places appointed for that purpose, and was performed by IMMERSION OF THE WHOLE BODY in the water."

I shall introduce a few more quotations from Mr. Wesley's works to shew how the best institutions, are by degrees, altered and corrupted by the folly of such men as would fain be wiser than God.

In his Ecclesiastical History, Century the 2d. Part ii. Chap. iv. Sect. i. he says, "There is no institution so excellent which the corruption and folly of man will not in time alter for the worse, and load with additions foreign to its nature and original design. Such was the fate of christianity. In this century many unnecessary rites and ceremonies were added to the christian worship; these changes, while they destroyed the beauti-

ful simplicity of the gospel, were pleasing to the gross multitude, who are more delighted with the splendor of external institutions, than with the native charms of rational and solid piety."

Cent. 2, Part ii. Chap. iv. Sect. ix. "The sacrament of *baptism* was administered publicly twice every year, at the festivals of Easter and Pentecost, or Whitsuntide either by the *Bishop* or the *Presbyter*, in consequence of his appointment. The persons that were to be baptized, after they had repeated the *creed*, confessed and renounced their sins, and particularly the *Devil*, and his works, were IMMERSSED UNDER WATER, and received into Christ's kingdom by a solemn invocation of *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*, according to the express command of our blessed Lord. After baptism they received the *sign of the cross*, were *anointed*, and, by *prayers*, and *imposition of hands*, solemnly commended to the mercy of God, and dedicated to his service; in consequence of which they received *milk and honey*, which concluded the ceremony."

From hence we may observe, how early the ordinance of baptism was loaded with "Additions foreign to its nature and original design." And, in a few centuries afterwards, infants were supposed to be fit subjects for it.

Some observations on the public baptism of infants in the Church of England.

THOSE who first began to baptize infants, and the Episcopalians after them (if they go by the ancient *Rubric*,) are nearer in appearance (though not in reality) to the apostolic practice, than their dissenting pædobaptist brethren. For it is evident from the directions for the public baptism of infants in "*The book of common prayer, and administration of the sacraments &c.—according to the use of the Church of England,*" that they baptize none but those, who, in ap-

pearance at least, are baptized on a personal profession of faith.

Direction is given to have baptism administered on public occasions, Sundays and other holy days, "*because in the baptism of infants, every man present may be put in remembrance of HIS OWN PROFESSION made to God in his baptism ;*" that is, he is now to REMEMBER HIS OWN PROFESSION, which he made, when, perhaps, he was not ten days old. It is true he cannot remember other things which took place at that early period ; but if there were any such thing as *his own profession made to God in his baptism*, it is but reasonable to suppose, that he should remember that transaction. But what did he profess ? Why surely a great deal. When he was about to be baptized, it was said of him, " THIS INFANT MUST also FAITHFULLY FOR HIS PART PROMISE by you that are his sureties, (until he come of age to take it upon himself) that *he* will renounce," (that is, he himself must now by them promise) " that *he* will renounce the devil and all his works, and constantly believe God's holy word, and obediently keep his commandments."

After this the minister repeats the creed, and interrogates the child, thus, " Dost thou believe in God the Father, Almighty Maker of heaven and earth ? And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son our Lord ? &c."

Answer. " All this I stedfastly believe.

Minister. " Wilt thou be baptized in this faith ?

Answer. " That is my desire.

Minister. " Wilt thou then obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life ?

Answer. " I will."

Here it is evident, that the questions are put to the infant, and the answers are considered as his ; although it is true they are uttered by the God-fathers and God-mothers. (Or to speak less profanely and more properly, odd-fathers, and odd-mothers.)

Now if any person ever so young, professing faith in Jesus Christ, *faithfully for his part promise*, that *he* will renounce the devil and all his works, and constantly believe God's holy word, and obediently keep his commandments, and walk in the same all the days of his life, he ought surely to be baptized. Nor do I know of any baptist, who would be disposed to forbid water, that any person really, *faithfully*, and understandingly promising, and professing all this, should not be baptized.

As to the mode too, it is evident that the Church of England did formerly (however they may dispense with it in our day) prefer the apostolic practice : for it is written in the *Rubric*, "*Then the priest shall take the child into his hands, and shall say to the God-fathers and God-mothers, Name this Child. And then naming it after them, (if they shall certify him that the child may well endure it,) he shall dip it in the water discreetly and warily, saying, N. I baptize thee, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.*"

But if they certify that the child is weak, it shall suffice to pour water upon it, saying the aforesaid words."

It seems sprinkling would not do at all. If the child be hale, and *may well endure it*, it is said the priest "*shall DIP IT IN WATER.*" "*But if they certify that the child is weak,*" (there is no other exception, only if it be weak and cannot endure dipping) "*it shall suffice,*" it is not so good, but then as the child is sick, "*it shall suffice to pour water upon it.*"

"*Then the priest shall say,—We receive this child into the congregation of Christ's flock ; and do* sign him with the sign of the cross, in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner against sin, the world, and the devil ; and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end. Amen.*"

"*Then the priest shall say.—Seeing now, dearly be-*

* Here the priest shall make a cross upon the child's forehead.

loved brethren, that *this child is regenerate* and grafted into the body of Christ's Church; let us give thanks unto Almighty God, for these benefits, and with one accord make our prayers unto *him*, that *this child* may lead the rest of his life according to this beginning.

"Then shall the priest say,—We yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate *this infant* with thy holy spirit, to receive *him* for thine own *child* by adoption, and to incorporate *him* into thy holy Church. And humbly we beseech thee to grant, that *he* being dead unto sin, and living unto righteousness, and being BURIED with Christ in his death, may crucify the old man, and utterly abolish the whole body of sin; and that as *he* is made *partaker of the death* of thy son, *he* may also be *partaker* of his resurrection; so that finally with the residue of thy holy Church *he* may be an inheritor of thine everlasting kingdom, through Christ our Lord. Amen."

We find no account of infant baptism in the bible, nor in any other authentic history until the third century; but in this century, history informs us that, *infant-baptism, infant communion, god-fathers and god-mothers* were all in use. They are all connected, and were introduced about the same time, and they undoubtedly all ought to live or die together.

When some had erroneously imbibed the idea, that baptism was regeneration, and that it was impossible for an unbaptized person to be saved, they felt as if it were necessary for them to baptize their infants, and their sick, who had not been baptized. But as infants were not capable of making a personal profession of their faith in Christ, and as they could find no scriptural warrant for baptizing without such a profession; they were obliged to invent their godfathers and god-mothers, and to consider their answers as if given by the infants themselves.

And as they thought it might hasten the death of a sick person, whether an adult or an infant, to baptize

him, they invented pouring, or sprinkling, instead of baptizing. And, if we may give credit to history, for some hundreds of years after Christ, and even after infant-baptism was introduced, all except the *clinicks* (that is, those who were sick or confined to bed) were baptized by immersion.

A rational and consistent *Bibleist*, would suppose, that to be confined by sickness, would as fully justify the neglect of baptism, as the neglect of the assembling of ourselves together for public worship. There is nothing in the scriptures to justify a neglect in the latter instance, when it can be consistently avoided, any more than in the former. *But God will have mercy and not sacrifice.* But when these human inventions, infant-baptism and sprinkling, were first introduced, baptism was viewed as absolutely necessary for salvation; but hearing and obeying the word of God, were then, as they are in our day, considered as matters of less importance.

The reader is now requested to observe, from the following extracts, the great difference respecting the subjects of baptism, between the Acts of Mr. David Brainard, as recorded in his Journal, and the Acts of the Apostles as recorded in the New Testament.

In the *Acts* of Mr. Brainard, it is written,

LORD's Day July 21, 1745.—“I baptized my interpreter and his wife, who were the first I baptized among the Indians.”

July 26.—“Baptized my interpreters children.”

Lord's Day, November 3.—“I baptized fourteen persons of the Indians, six adults and eight children:—And there was not one of the adults I baptized, but what had given me some comfortable grounds to hope, that God, had wrought a work of special grace in their hearts.”

November 4.—“Baptized a child this day.—I have now baptized in all forty-seven persons of the Indians, twenty-three adults, and twenty-four children.”

Lord's Day, January 5. (1745, 6.) “Baptized two persons this day ; one adult and one child.”

Lord's Day, February 9.—“Baptized three persons, two adults and one child : the adults, I have reason to hope, were both truly pious.”

April 28.—“Baptized six children this day.”

Lord's Day, June 1. 1746.—“I then baptized ten persons, five adults and five children.”

Let us now examine the Acts of the Apostles. As both they and Mr. Brainard preached among the heathen, if the practice of both respecting the subjects of baptism, were alike, we may expect to find a similarity in their Journals. Therefore,

Please to read *Acts* ii. 41. viii. 12—17. viii. 35—39. ix. 18. x. 47, 48. xvi. 14, 15, 40. xvi. 27—34. xviii. 8. xix. 1—7. xxii, 10—16.

These passages, which contain all the instances recorded in the *Acts* relating to the administration of baptism by the Apostles, make their conduct, respecting the subjects and mode of baptism, appear just like the conduct of the baptists in our day.

Were a person unacquainted with the characters of Brainard and of the Apostles, but acquainted with the different denominations, and practices of christians in this land to read the above quotations ; and then be asked,

“Of what denomination of Christians, do you think, was David Brainard?”

Would he not reply ?—“It is probable he was a Presbyterian ; it is certain he baptized infants or children, of whom he expresses no satisfactory hope or evidence, that they were new creatuaes ; but he baptized men and women on quite a different footing : for he says, ‘there was not one of the adults I baptized, but what had given me some comfortable grounds to hope, that God had wrought a work of special grace in their hearts.’

“Brainard rarely, if ever, baptized a number of adults without baptizing a number of children at the same time: But he repeatedly baptized children (of whom he says nothing about having any reason to hope they were truly pious;) when he baptized no adults at all: therefore he was certainly a paedobaptist.”

Should the person then be asked,—“Of what denomination of christians, do you think, were the Apostles?”

Would he not reply?—“They were nothing but Baptists; there is no account of their baptizing men, women *and children*, adults and infants together, nor is there any account of their ever baptizing any infants alone, when they baptized no adults. It is evident they had only *one baptism*; for they baptized only professed believers; but they could not see the heart, and therefore they might baptize some, who were “in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.” But it is quite plain, that they baptized only those who, they thought, were believers. Pray attend to their language all along; “They that *gladly* received his word were baptized.” “when they *believed* Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women.” Children are not added here, as they are in the *Acts* of Mr. Brainard. “The Eunuch said, see, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou *believest* with all thine heart thou mayest. And he answered and said, I *believe* Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” “Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized which have *received* the Holy Ghost, as well as we.” And the households they baptized were persons to whom they spake the word of the Lord, and whom they called brethren and comforted. “Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord, with all his house: and many of the Corinthians hearing *believed*, and were baptized.” After Paul’s conversion Annanias said to him, “And now why tarriest thou?”

arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins." These Apostles, as they are called, never say any thing about baptizing infants, nor exhort their hearers to get their infants baptized. It is evident they were Baptists.

"Such, it is likely, would be the language of a stranger to these writings: And such, it is certain, is the language of many serious people, who have long studied them."

A Collection of Hymns, on Baptism.

H Y M N I. PARTICULAR METRE.

THE PRACTICE OF ANCIENT CHRISTIANS.

1. NEVER does Truth more shine,
With beams of Heavenly light,
Than when the scriptures join
To prove it true and right:
Than when each text doth each explain,
And all unite to speak the same.
2. Thus Peter, who obey'd,
What Jesus said, was wise,
And preach'd as he was led,
"Repent and be baptiz'd:
Thus Philip did to th' Eunuch say,
If you believe in Christ you may.
3. Paul preach'd the words of grace,
Whole households did believe,
And were baptiz'd to Christ,
Whose Gospel they'd receiv'd:
Thus *Baptists* were of ancient date,
As sacred history does relate.
4. We see tis no new thing,
To teach, and then baptize,
So Christians first began,
Christ's ordinance to prize;
This makes us cheerfully obey,
And go as they have led the way.
5. [Arise my soul! arise!
And show thy faith and love,
In Jesus be batiz'd,
And let the churches prove
Thy faith, thy zeal, thy ardent flame,
Thy heart on fire for Jesus name.

6. Who from the dead arose,
 (As he himself is God,)
 Which teaches us and shows,
 Our ransom-price is blood :
 That we should henceforth live anew
 And lives of love and praise pursue.]
-

[Many of the following Hymns were composed by Mr.
 JOHN FELLOWS.]

H Y M N II. *Long Metre.*

THE COMMISSION.

1. **T**HE heavenly King who came to save,
 Had gain'd the conquest o'er the grave;
 The pow'rs of *Death* and *Hell* laid low;
 And greatly vanish'd every foe.
 2. And now he stood prepar'd to rise,
 Majestic to his native skies;
 Assume the robes he once laid down;
 And take his sceptre and his crown.
 3. His lov'd Apostles round him stand,
 Attentive to his last command:
 When from his lips these accents broke;
 The heav'ns applauding while he spoke.
 4. "Rejoice, my friends! ye chosen few,
 "Vast is the prize obtain'd for you:
 "High in the heav'ns I fix my throne;
 "And the whole spacious earth's my own.
 5. "Go therefore! Go, at my command;
 "And bear my name thro' ev'ry land:
 "Whoe'er believes what you proclaim;
 "Baptize him in Jehovah's name.
 6. "Then kindly teach them all my ways,
 "And from their lips to sound my praise:
 "My presence shall your work attend,
 "Till time his circling course shall end."
 6. Thy just command, Lord, we revere!
 We first thy sacred truths declare:
 Then in thy holy name Baptize
 The men that our high message prize.
-

H Y M N III. *Common Metre.*

*The Ordinances of Christ to be preserved in their
 primitive Simplicity. 2 Thess. ii. 15.*

1. **L**ORD, how delightful to our eyes
 Should all thy precepts be!

- O how should we preserve and prize
What was ordain'd by thee !
2. How full of thee, most gracious God,
Thy gospel rituals shine !
Their nature, end, and ev'ry mode
Loudly proclaim them thine.
 3. Should human prudence ever dare
To frame thy laws anew,
How vain would the attempt appear !
And how presumptuous too !
 4. Forbid it Lord ! let ev'ry heart
Thy wise commands revere ;
And never from thy word depart,
But learn thy worship there.
-

H Y M N IV. Long Metre.

Baptism necessary to Communion, but not to Salvation. Eph. iv. 5.

1. **H**OW amiable, Eternal God,
Is Zion, thy most blest'd abode !
We would within thy courts appear,
And join thy saints in worship there,
 2. But where her tow'rs sublimely rise,
The river full in prospect lies :
Like *Shiloh's* hallow'd brook, that flow'd
Close by the oracle of God.
 3. Invited to the holy place,
Thro' the fair stream our feet must pass ;
Such is thy will ; Lord, we obey,
And come in thine appointed way.
 4. Yet Christ our condescending King,
Up to his courts above will bring
Those pious souls who, through mistake,
A diff'rent path to Zion take.
 5. Not men, nor means can limit him,
Not falling drops, nor flowing stream ;
He who created man at first
Remembers that we are but dust.
 6. Yet whatsoe'er weak men maintain,
But *One Baptism* will still remain :
Which tho' Christ's wand'ring sheep may miss,
He will not lose one soul of his.
-

H Y M N V. As the 113 Psalm.

Sprinkling no Baptism. Luke xii. 50.

1. **M**Y soul with humble love pursue
The solemn task thou hast in view ;

Why should'st thou murmur or repine?
 Had not thy SAVIOUR when on earth
 A Baptism painful unto death?
 How dreadful His, compar'd with thine!

2. Think how the wide extended main,
 Exceeds one single drop of rain;
 Such were the floods, and storms of woes,
 Which overwhelm'd his righteous head,
 When standing in the sinner's stead,
 He greatly dy'd to save his foes.
3. Baptismal waters were design'd
 To bring this wond'rous scene to mind,
 And represent it to our eyes:
 Can we suppose the wrath so small,
 Which he endur'd to save us all,
 That sprinkling may for this suffice!
4. Rather than such an abject thought,
 Degrading what my LORD has wrought,
 Should take possession of my soul;
 Let me in my REDEEMER's name,
 Be plung'd beneath the surging stream,
 Where the vast ocean's billows roll!

H Y M N VI. *Long Metres*

Philip and the Eunuch. Acts viii. 36.

1. THE sacred page proclaims abroad,
 The glories of the sovereign God;
 Whose Providence and Grace unite,
 To bring his great decrees to light.
2. From *Ethiopia's* sun-burnt plains,
 Where sultry summer ceaseless reigns,
 An *Eunuch* chief, of wealth and fame,
 To worship in the temple came.
3. Returning home the thoughtful sage
 Perus'd the deep prophetic page;
 Of JESUS read, as on he went,
 But doubted whom the Prophet meant.
4. By heaven's command, that moment came
Philip, a follow'r of the LAMB:
 Him the enquiring prince receiv'd,
 And all the word's he spake, believ'd.
5. Then of his duty well apprised
 The *Eunuch* wish'd to be Baptiz'd:
 A silver stream ran full in sight,
 He asks, and soon receives the rite.
6. He journeys on without delay,
 In CHRIST, rejoicing all the way,
 And tells the *Ethiopian* race
 The wonders of redeeming Grace.

7. Thus willing souls succeed, and claim
 Within God's house a place and name,
 Better (his gracious promise runs,)
 Than that of daughters, or of sons.

H Y M N VII. *Long Metre.*

The figurative Meaning of the Ordinance of Baptism. 1 Pet. iii. 21.

1. **C**OME, all ye sons of Grace, and view
 Your bleeding SAVIOUR'S love to you:
 Behold him sink with heavy woes,
 And give his life to save his foes!
2. When you behold the sacred wave,
 You see the emblem of his Grave:
 Come! all who would his laws obey,
 And view the place where JESUS lay.
3. But not *Death's* adamant chain,
 Could long the mighty LORD detain:
 Behold him cheer the heavy gloom;
 And rise refulgent from the tomb.
4. When you ascend above the flood,
 Then call to mind the rising GOD:
 Ye saints, lift up your joyful eyes,
 Exulting see your SAVIOUR rise.
5. Ye too, are buried with your LORD,
 Who in the water own his word:
 And joyfully behold therein,
 An emblem of your death to sin.
6. Fresh from the stream, and fill'd with love;
 Far from the tents of guilt remove:
 Nobly from strength to strength proceed,
 And rise to ev'ry worthy deed.

H Y M N VIII. *Short Metre.*

Infants devoted to God, but not Baptized. Acts viii. 36, & 37.

1. **G**REAT SAVIOUR, condescend
 To bless our rising race:
 Oh may their willing spirits bend
 To thy victorious Grace!
2. 'Twould give us vast delight
 Their happiness to see:
 Our warmest wishes all unite
 To lead their souls to thee.
3. But all the race of men,
 Are heirs of sin and shame:
 Nor dare we, till they're born again,
 Baptize them in thy name.

4. They only who believe,
Compose thy church on earth;
Her arms are open to receive
None but of heav'nly birth.
5. Great God, thy Spirit pour
Upon our infant feed;
Oh, bring the much-desir'd hour
Which makes them thine indeed!
6. May they receive thy word,
Confess the SAVIOUR's name,
And follow their despised LORD
Down to the sacred stream.
7. Then we our willing race
Will to thine altar bring;
There to adore thy sov'reign Grace,
And thy salvation sing.

H Y M N IX. *Common Metre.*

The Believer constrained by the love of Christ to follow him in his Ordinances.

2 Cor. v. 14. and 15.

1. **D**EAR LORD, and will thy pard'ning love
Embrace a wretch so vile?
Wilt thou my load of guilt remove
And bless me with thy smile.
2. Hast thou for me the cross endur'd
And all the shame despis'd?
And shall I be ashamed, O LORD
With thee to be Baptiz'd?
3. Dear LORD, the ardor of thy love
Reproves my cold delays:
But now my willing footsteps move
In thy delightful ways.
4. I cannot still rebellious stand!
Let fear and shame be gone!
This ordinance is thy command;
Thy will my God be done.
5. [Now I can bid my friends farewell,
To practice CHRIST's command:
This is the road that christians go,
The way to Cana's land.]
6. Young people all, embrace his call,
His blessed truth embrace,
That you may find true happiness,
And see him face to face.]

HYMN X. *Common Metre.**The Baptism of Repentance. Acts xix. 4.*

1. COME, all ye humble sons of Grace,
Who feel the weight of sin ;
Confess before JEHOVAH's face,
How vile your hearts have been.
 2. If you sincere repentance feel
For ev'ry hateful stain ;
JESUS your broken heart will heal,
JESUS will make you clean.
 3. To the Baptismal water come
CHRIST's own appointed way,
The emblem of your SAVIOUR's tomb ;
O ! come without delay.
 4. Welcome you are, and you alone,
This sacred rite to share ;
To nat'ral men can ne'er be known
What heav'n has taught us here.
 5. Here with admiring eyes we view
Our dying, rising LORD :
Thro' Grace resolve to live anew
Obedient to his word.
 6. Eternal God, thy pow'r display
To wound and heal the heart :
Thee may thy people all obey,
Nor from thy will depart.
-

HYMN XI. *Long Metre.**The Penitent. Acts xvi. 13.*

1. ALAS, my soul ! how black thy stain !
Thy guilt how great ! Thy hopes how vain !
How heavy the enormous load !
How dire the vengeance of a God !
2. How shall I 'scape, where shall I turn !
Does not his wrath relentless burn
Against the men who durst despise
The mighty ruler of the skies !
3. Does not his justice urge the claim
Due to the honours of his name ?
Methinks I see his arm display'd
To crush the wretch his hands have made.
4. Yet his kind hand the stroke delays,
The lifted arm of vengeance stays ;
O ! may I then lift up my eyes,
And hope for mercy from the skies ?
5. Yes, I behold a ray of light
Beam thro' the darkness of the night ;

Yonder I see the cross appear,
And all the tempest driving there.

6. Now from my sight the clouds remove,
And heav'n's pure azure shines with love;
Bright as a sun, my LORD, I see,
He groan'd, he bled, he dy'd for me!
7. Amazing Grace! and shall I still
Prove disobedient to his will;
Shall I decline thro' shame or fear
To seek his grave, and find him there!
8. Ah no! dear LORD, the wat'ry tomb
Belongs to thee, and there I come:
Thence may I in thy likeness rise,
And follow thee above the skies.

H Y M N XII. *Common Metre.*

The importance of Divine Institutions. Acts ii. 38.

1. **S**TRUCK with the brightness of thy crown,
Almighty KING OF GRACE!
We lay rebellious reasonings down,
And to thy word give place.
2. Our thoughts attempt thy ways in vain;
How oft we blindly soar!
And When our reas'ning pow'rs we strain,
'Tis but to err the more.
3. But error shrinks before thine eye:
Thou sit'st enthron'd in light:
Heav'n Earth, and Hell uncover'd lie,
And open to thy sight.
4. Then may we to thy ways adhere,
And follow thee alone:
Teach us thy wisdom to revere,
And to distrust our own.
5. If thine example, and thy word
Conduct us to the flood;
Shall human wisdom be prefer'd!
Shall we be deaf to God;
6. What, if the World's contemptuous pride
Thy sacred truths gainsay:
Shall that set thy commands aside!
And shall not we obey!
7. We own thee, LORD, supremely wise,
Thy ways are right and fit;
Our wisdom in obedience lies,
'Tis honour to submit.

H Y M N XIII. *Long Metre.**The Israelites Baptized in the Sea.* 1 Cor. x. 2.

1. **W**HEN *Israel* left th' *Egyptian* coasts,
With speed they pass'd o'er *Zoan's* plains :
Their leader was the LORD OF HOSTS ;
He broke th' insulting tyrant's chains.
 2. Their march they took by heav'n's command ;
Across the deep their journey lay :
Nor must they enter *Canaan's* land,
Till first they'er buried in the sea.
 3. Hard were they press'd on ev'ry side ;
On right and left huge rocks appear,
In front the sea, vast, horrid, wide,
While *Pharaoh* thunders on the rear,
 4. The tribes stand still in wild dismay ;
But heav'n in mercy hears their cry :
"March on" says God" without delay ;
"I'll found salvation from on high."
 5. Advancing where the furies roar,
They wonderful deliv'rance found :
In safety reach'd the farther shore,
And saw their proud oppressors drown'd,
 6. So *Israel's* sons, the heirs of Grace,
Freed from the cruel yoke of sin,
Must thro' Baptismal waters pass ;
And thus the way to heav'n begin.
 7. Tho' they with trembling steps attend,
Oppress'd with fears of various kind ;
Yet they at CHRIST's command descend,
And rising, leave their fears behind.
 8. Now like the *Israelitish* band,
They sing their great Deliverer's praise,
March boldly to the promis'd land,
And reap the fruit of conqu'ring Grace.
-

H Y M N XIV. *Long Metre.**The Duties of Baptized Christians.* Mat. iv. 1.

1. **W**HEN the Eternal SON OF GOD,
Had been Baptiz'd in *Jordan's* flood ;
To the lone desert he repairs,
And sore temptation firmly bears.
2. Should you that have been now Baptiz'd,
Be thus with *Satan's* darts surpriz'd ;
Lift up to heav'n your wishful eyes,
Your hope, your help in JESUS lies.
3. Never presume to think or say
The stream has wash'd your sins away :

Never depend on what's your own,
Nor trust to works or duties done.

4. Each rite which truth and love ordain,
Points to the LAMB that once was slain;
Our wand'ring thoughts to him they call,
The centre and the soul of all.
5. Baptiz'd with CHRIST, be it your aim
To dignify the Christian name:
With him aspire to things above,
And put on CHRIST in faith and love.

H Y M N XV. *Common Metre.*

The duties of Baptized Christians. 1 Pet. ii. 9.

1. **Y**E happy converts who have trod
The way your Saviour calls;
Have given up yourselves to God,
And dwell within his walls.
2. With highest rev'rence, as is due,
Regard his righteous laws;
Your Saviour now commits to you
The honour of his cause.
3. The pow'rs of *Hell* with watchful care
Will each advantage take;
And pour the thunder of their war
Thro' ev'ry breach you make.
4. A wicked world with ceaseless spite
Will mark the way you go:
Be then your conduct fair as light,
And silence ev'ry foe.
5. Shou'd cares and troubles cross your road,
And many such there may;
Each day address your cries to GOD,
And watch as well as pray.
6. Let CHRIST your fervent love demand,
His laws be your delight;
Strong in his strength rejoicing stand,
And put your foes to flight.
7. He'll free your souls from all distress,
And make each trouble cease:
His ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all his paths are peace.

H Y M N XVI. *Short Metre.*

The Duties of Baptized Christians. Col. iii. 12.

1. **A**LL you that in the flood
Have own'd your holy Lord;

- And to his people join'd yourselves
According to his word.
2. In *Zion* you must dwell,
Her alter ne'er forsake ;
Must come to all her solemn feasts,
And all her joys partake.
 3. She must employ your thoughts,
And your unceasing care :
Her welfare be your constant wish,
And her increase your prayer:
 4. With humbleness of mind,
Amongst her sons rejoice :
A meek and quiet spirit is
With God of highest price,
 5. Never offend or grieve
Your brethren in the way ;
But shun the dark abodes of strife,
Like children of the day.
 6. Highly in love esteem
Your Pastors in the Lord ;
The means of life on them bestow,
Who labour in the word.

H Y M N XVII. *Long Metre.*

Discouragements removed. John viii. 12.

1. **Y**E youths and virgins all, who wait
Continually at *Zion's* gate ;
Ye who delight in Wisdom's ways,
And love to speak Immanuel's praise.
2. Ye who your native vileness mourn,
And to the great Redeemer turn :
Who see your wretched state by sin ;
“ Ye blessed of the Lord, come in.”
3. Let not the world with Christ divide
The wav'ring heart of his young bride ;
Nothing in earth, or heav'n above,
Like him, is worthy of your love.
4. All that is dear on earth forsake,
And Jesus for your leader take :
Follow the Lamb where'er he goes ;
Nor dread the number of your foes.
5. Confer no more with flesh and blood,
Press on ! by whomsoever withstood ;
Your Captain shall the conquest gain ;
Earth, Hell, and Sin shall rage in vain.
6. Profess your faith in Jesu's name ;
Follow him boldly thro' the stream :

Your fellow saints in ancient days
Thus own'd their God, and lov'd his ways.

7. Steady like them obey your Lord ;
Enter his Church ; feast on his word ;
Till Angels thro' the skies proclaim
The marriage supper of the Lamb.
-

H Y M N XVIII. Long Metre.

The Blood of Christ cleanseth from all Sin. 1 John i. 7.

1. JESUS, my SAVIOUR and my KING ;
To thee my grateful heart I bring ;
Thou art all glorious in my eyes :
On thee my whole dependance lies.
 2. Thou hast been slain, O LAMB OF GOD !
Thou hast redeem'd me with thy blood :
Thine arm alone can set me free ;
My whole salvation rests on thee.
 3. I will not build on what's my own ;
Or trust to works or duties done ;
On thee alone my hopes I place,
My only refuge is thy Grace.
 4. Not mine own arm can me sustain :
No outward washings make me clean :
No works of mine my debt can pay :
No tears can wash my stains away.
 5. No ordinances can atone,
But only make my Saviour known ;
They may as emblems brightly shine,
But all the work, my God, is thine.
 6. The fountain thou hast ever been,
Whose streams can wash away my sin :
Wash me, oh ! wash me, in the flood,
That ever-cleansing stream, thy Blood.
-

H Y M N XIX. Long Metre.

The Ordinances of Christ tend to promote practical Godliness. Rom. vi. 4.

1. ALL you that in the sacred flood
Have humbly own'd your SAVIOUR GOD ;
His great command lies on you still ;
All righteousness you must fulfil.
2. With scrup'lous care the hypocrite
Attends to each external rite,
While Justice, Truth, and Faith depart,
And all religion of the heart.

3. For weightier matters of the Law,
He feels no zeal, nor love, nor awe;
And seeks by rituals to atone
For sins and follies he has done.
4. But the enlight'ned soul pursues
The call of GOD with different views;
He round a nobler centre moves,
And he obeys because he loves.
5. If he attend the preached word,
He waits a visit from his LORD;
Or at each ordinance appear,
He humbly hopes to meet him there,
6. And if IMMANUEL shews his face,
And blefs the season with his grace;
With strength renew'd the saint proceeds
In heav'nly love and righteous deeds.

H Y M N XX. L. M.

Salvation in the ark a figure of Baptism

1. **W**HEN th' ancient world God's Patience try'd
And long his threatening vengeance dar'd,
The righteous Noah favour found,
His family alone was spar'd.
2. In secret chambers of the Ark
They all secure from danger lie,
When th' ocean's banks were broke, and floods
Burst through the windows of the Sky.
3. Proud waters o'er the mountains roll,
And common ruin widely spread;
Yet the blest'd Patriarch's house survives,
When all mankind beside were dead.
4. At the Almighty's awful word
The obsequious floods retire again;
And Noah from his mistick tomb
Peoples the ruin'd earth with men.
5. So to restore a world o'er whelm'd
With guilt and misery, dead in Sins,
Our SAVIOUR rising from the Grave,
Another race of men begins.
6. New Creatures of a heavenly form,
Whose souls his sacred image bear;
While dead to sin, they live to God,
And spotless in white robes appear.
7. Bury'd in their Redeemer's Grave,
With him they live, with him they rise;

While the lost race of human kind
Delug'd with sin and ruin lies.

8. O happy souls whom grace revives!
Their bodies too their LORD will raise,
Refin'd and fit for holy souls,
To see his face, and sing his praise.

H Y M N XXI. L. M.

Buried with Christ in Baptism.

1. **O**UR Lord was once all plung'd in Tears,
And bath'd in bloody Sufferings too:
What Fountain was requir'd to wash
Our guilty Souls, his Wounds will show!
2. This wondrous grace to represent
Baptismal waters were design'd,
In which our LORD, was bury'd too,
To his great Father's will resign'd;
3. Thus penitents who die to sin,
With him are bury'd in his Grave;
Thus quicken'd to a life divine,
Their souls a resurrection have.
4. And tho' their bodies turn to dust,
This holy symbol does assure,
The resurrection of the just
Shall render them all bright and pure.
5. Made like his body ours shall be,
When Christ, who is our life, appears:
Who to procure us life, was once sold
Baptiz'd in his own blood and Tears.

H Y M N XXII. C. M.

Baptized in the Cloud and in the Sea.

1. **W**HEN from Egyptian slavery
The Hebrews were redeem'd,
The parted Seas and covering cloud
A grave to Israel seem'd:
2. But soon the joyful tribes emerge,
And stand upon the shore,
With grateful Hearts and tuneful tongues
Their Saviour's Name adore.

2. He made th' obsequious waves retire,
His favourite tribes to save;
Made them a way to liberty,
Where Egypt found a grave.
4. Thus Jacob's sons baptiz'd of old
To Moses in the Sea,
Sav'd by God's arm, themselves devote
His statutes to obey.
5. So from the Bondage of our Sins,
Redeem'd by sovereign grace,
We thro' his watry sepulchre
Our Saviour's footsteps trace.
6. Our Sins, the worst of Enemies,
Are in a figure, drown'd;
To a new life our Souls are rais'd,
With tender mercy crown'd.
7. To thee, O Jesus, may we live.
Devoted to thy fear;
Thee will we love; thee will we praise,
And all thy laws revere.

H Y M N XXIII. L. M.

1. **W**HEN fam'd Bethesda's waters flow'd,
By a descending Angel mov'd;
The wond'rous Pool a sovereign Bath
For every pain and sickness prov'd.
2. Hither distemper'd crouds repair,
Hither the feeble, lame, and blind;
The first who steps into the spring,
Leaves his disease and pains behind.
3. That languishing and dying souls
A nobler cure might freely meet,
The Son of God came down and stir'd
Baptismal waters with his feet,
4. Lord, in this rite we thee would own,
As the first Christians led the way:
Here we just see the vale of death,
Then view the Resurrection Day.
5. 'Tis by thy death our souls are heal'd,
Our broken hearts assuage their pain;
Our Spirits are with life inspir'd,
They breathe, they move, they rise again.

6. With lowly minds, and lofty songs,
Let all admire the Saviour's Grace,
Till the great rising Day reveal
Th' immortal glory of his face.

HYMN XXIV. Long Metre.

Sprinkling falls short of Baptism—Infants not to be Baptized.

1. **P**LANTED together as we read,
In likeness of his death,
I think we must be all agreed,
That sprinkling's something less.
2. For how does sprinkling show his death,
In any sense at all?
Dipping I'm sure must be the mode,
All others short will fall.
3. Primitive practice likewise shows,
They to the water came;
Philip did with the Eunuch go
Into and out again.
4. We do not find a basin sent
To bring the water near;
No, Christ our Lord to Jordan went,
And was baptized there.
5. Both men and women were baptized,
By scripture we are shown;
But not a child of infant size,
No, not so much as one.
6. At first, Christians true faith profess'd,
Before this act was done:
Subjects and mode are still the same,
We to the water come.
7. Christ we'll praise, our ris'n, glorious King,
Obey and give him thanks;
Once he was bury'd in the grave,
And once down Jordan's banks.

HYMN XXV. Common Metre.

A practical improvement of Baptism. Col. iii. 10

1. Attend, ye children of your God,
Ye heirs of glory hear;

- For accents so divine as these
Might charm the dullest ear.
2. Baptiz'd into your Saviour's death,
Your souls to sin must die,
With Christ your Lord, ye live anew,
With Christ ascend on high.
 3. There by his Father's side he sits,
Enthron'd divinely fair;
Yet owns himself your brother still,
And your forerunner there.
 4. Rise from these earthly trifles, rise
On wings of faith and love;
Above your choicest treasure lies,
And be your hearts above.
 5. But earth and sin will drag us down,
When we attempt to fly;
Lord, send thy strong attractive power
To raise, and fix us high.
 6. We wish to join the blessed throng,
Who sing around the throne,
Begin anew the living song,
GRACE, GRACE, and GRACE ALONE.
-

*The following ODE may with propriety, be used at any time; but it is peculiarly adapted to a baptismal occasion, or to the funeral of a pious person.**

Submission :—A SAPPIC ODE.

WHY should vain mortals tremble at the sight of
Death and destruction in this vale of trouble
Where pain and anguish fill the world with horror,
Sounding with death groans,
Death will invade us by the means appointed,
And we must all bow to the king of terrors;
Nor am I anxious, if I am prepared,
What shape he comes in.

Infinite goodness teaches us submission,
Bids us be quiet under all his dealings;
Never repining, but for ever praising
God our Creator.

Well may we praise him—all his ways are perfect,
Though a splendence, infinitely glowing,

Dazzles in glory on the sight of mortals,
Struck blind by lustre.

Good is Jehovah in bestowing Sunshine,
Nor less his goodness in the storm and thunder ;
Mercies and judgments both proceed from kindness,
Infinite kindness.

O then exult that God forever reigneth ;
Clouds, which around him hinder our perception,
Bind us the stronger to exalt his name, and
Shout louder praises.

Then to the wisdom of my Lord and master,
I will commit all that I have or wish for ;
Sweetly as babes sleep will I give my life up,
When call'd to yield it.

Saints by immersion giving faith profess in
Jesus, who dy'd for vile and wretched Sinners,
That we should henceforth live to him, who only
Saves us from ruin.

Then, as Christ Jesus from the earth arose, and
As we rise from the liquid grave when baptiz'd,
So Saints shall wake to everlasting life, and
Sing ceaseless anthems.

* Well may the sincere Christian be resigned to all the events of Divine Providence : For the gospel contains exceeding great and precious promises for all, who truly love God, who are the called according to his purpose. The real saint has something to support him under all the difficulties and trials of the present life : Yea, when called, he may cheerfully resign his body to the dust, and *sweetly sleep* in the grave ; for, by his baptism he has professed cordially to believe in a buried and risen Saviour, who has become the first fruits of them that slept ; and that when he shall appear, all his real friends, and followers shall be raised in his likeness, and *also appear with him in glory*. " For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God : and the dead in Christ shall rise first : Then we," that is, the saints, then on earth, " which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air : and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore, comfort one another with these words." 1. Thessalonians, fourth chapter.

*Extract of a Letter from the Reverend Dr. ROBBINS,
Minister of Plymouth, Massachusetts, in America, to
his Friend in England; dated 31st May 1793.*

I AM happy to inform you, that there is a great number of places in the United States, where there has been, and still is, a happy appearance of a glorious work of God, in the revival of religion; which affords a joyful evidence that God has not forsaken our guilty land; but that he is determined to work for his own name's sake, and, by "building up Zion to appear in his glory."—But O! how shall I, with becoming gratitude and humility, describe to you the joy which the friends of Zion have had, in beholding the wonderful work's of God's grace in this town, for about four months past? I have never seen any thing like it, during my ministry here for thirty-three years. The divine work began in January last. Nothing special in Providence, no mortal sickness, no particular calamity, had taken place among us, to rouse the attention of the people. We had been for a long time in a state of awful carelessness, as to the things of another world. During last summer and fall of the year, there appeared an unusual stupidity. Irreligion, profaneness, and disorder among the youth, profligacy of manners, error, delusion, and an amazing inattention to the word and ordinances of God, and to divine things, seemed to mark our character as a people. Though even then we had some wrestling Jacobs, who used to meet weekly for social prayer, and earnestly to implore the effusion of the Holy Spirit. But the general appearance was exceeding dark; and pious Christians were ready to look out for some fore and terrible judgment upon us. Indeed it appeared to me that we were nearly ripe, either for ruin, or the display of *sovereign grace*, and that God would soon say, "I have seen their forward ways, and will *destroy*, or I will *heal* them." The event seems to have proved that free and infinite grace had determined on the *latter*. It pleased God, as with "a still small voice," by the secret but powerful influ-

ence of his blessed Spirit, to awaken the attention of one, and another, and another, to a solemn concern for the welfare of their immortal souls. This at length became known to many others; and there being something *peculiar* in the circumstances and characters of those who were first awakened, it excited rather an unusual surprise in the minds of those who heard of it, and soon appeared to have a desirable effect upon many. From this small beginning the work has ever since increased—till it has become in a great measure general, as to serious impressions throughout the town. Very many there are, I may say scores if not hundreds, whose minds are solemnly impressed with the importance of everlasting things. Indeed the face of the town, and the general appearance and conduct of the inhabitants, are surprizingly altered. There is a remarkable *visible* reformation of manners, especially among the youth and children, who had been before very rude and disorderly. With respect to the latter, there is something very extraordinary and affecting. There is reason to hope that several of these children have at this time experienced a saving change. These first proposed the plan, and the rest readily came into it, to meet twice a week, in the evenings, for religious exercises and conversation about their souls, and the things of another world. They have held these meetings now for three months or more, in different houses, by the consent of their parents. They frequently amount to sixty, seventy, eighty, and once at my house to the number of ninety-two. They are by themselves. Those whom I mentioned as hopefully converted, commonly lead in their exercises; and the rest behave, though so numerous, with the greatest order, silence, and decency. And it is truly astonishing to hear (for they have been overheard frequently by others) the expressions, the fervour, the solemnity, which are manifest in the prayers and praises of these young creatures. They are generally from about the age of seven to fifteen years—Others, of different ages, have also their

religious meetings for conference and prayer, reading and singing, &c. almost every evening in the week, in various parts of the town. On Sabbath days, such crowded assemblies, and such awful solemnity in our congregation, have never been seen in our day. They appear as if hearing for eternity. We have not however had many as yet joined to our communion. I do not encourage them to be sudden in this matter, although they may give hopeful evidence of love to Christ. About twenty have been added to us, but a great many more entertain hopes of having passed from death to life : And very many others are now under serious concern, and appear to be convinced of sin, and anxious in the inquiry "What shall we do to be saved?" Indeed it has appeared, for some time, that "God is truly in this place." Numbers have been brought to bow to the sceptre of Christ, being "made willing in the day of his power." The dear friends of Christ, at the same time, as you will naturally suppose, are filled with joy and praise, at these tokens of the triumphs of their glorious Redeemer over Satan, these new trophies of his victory over the powers of darkness. We have been some times ready to hope, that this is the commencement of that joyful period, so often spoken of in promise and prophecy, and which has been so long and so ardently desired by all who love the appearing and kingdom of Christ, *the latter day glory of the Church* : At least that it may be regarded as some drops which are a prelude of a more glorious and plentiful shower of divine influences. May the Lord hasten it in his due time !

Extract of a Letter from a minister in the United States of America, to his friend in England.

Philadelphia, May 10, 1793.

WE have reason to regret that the kind of preaching, which was adopted by the primitive ministers of the Christian churches, by the reformers from

popery, and by the Scotch and English divines of the last century, has been so much neglected of late. Though the great body of Presbyterian and Independent ministers in this country are decided friends to the principles contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith, yet there are some who incline towards Arminian sentiments ; and of the professed Calvinists there are not a few who are unacquainted with that spirituality in preaching, which at once enters the heart, and warms the religious affections. Our ministers in the western parts of Pennsylvania and Virginia are, however, in general, warm experimental preachers : Indeed there has been a very general effusion of the Spirit of God upon the churches in that quarter for several years past. I have been a witness of most remarkable seasons of grace amongst the people in many counties of Virginia since the year 1786. Many hundreds of the most vain and careless creatures upon earth have been turned to God amongst the Presbyterians ; and a number of valuable young ministers have been formed, who are likely to prove of great service to the church. In Kentucky, a new settled-country bordering on the river Ohio, nearly a thousand miles from this city, there has been a remarkable revival of the power of religion in many congregations since last spring. But, alas ! in our cities along the coast, Boston, New-York, Philadelphia, and Charleston, the true spirit of evangelical piety is much diminished. We are not so much engaged in preaching as we ought to be ; and a carnal worldly spirit reigns too much amongst our professors of religion, who are comparatively few, if we consider the numbers who are entirely and openly devoted to the service of Satan.

The Methodists in the late Mr. Wesly's connexion have been very numerous in Maryland and Virginia for some years, but are now much on the decline. And indeed it is very remarkable that they who continually preach the possibility of final apostacy in a Christian, in order to excite their people to greater watchfulness, should be the most prone to instability,

of any denomination that I know. The causes of this perhaps, in general may be, their pronouncing too early and decisively persons to be Christians, who are only learning the rudiments of true religion, and their disposition to depend too much upon that exertion which a momentary excitement of the passions creates, without applying constantly and dependantly to the fountain of divine influences treasured in the blessed Savior according to the tenor of the covenant of grace.

The Baptists are very numerous in the southern States. Some of them are Arminians, too many Antinomians, but the majority are real Calvinists, a good deal acquainted with experimental religion.

[*The foregoing extracts were taken from the Evangelical Magazine.*]

[*The following extracts were never before printed.*]

From an aged Baptist Minister to one newly ordained.

P—e, July 18, 1788.

Rev. and Dear SIR,

YOURS of the 20th ult. was duly received, and would have been answered before this, had not a croud of business prevented. To talk of the importance of the work of the *ministry*, and our incompetency for the discharge of the duties of that office is one thing; but really to feel them is the great important matter. This drives us to an Almighty Saviour, whose promised presence is our great qualification. Great circumspection, indeed, is necessary in a *young minister*; for his future success much depends on the honourable manner in which he begins and discharges the duties of his *ministry* in the first years of it. Too attentive to your studies you cannot well be, if together with your attention to study you take heed to yourself, and to the flock of God over which you are set. It is but too common for *young ministers*, after meeting a kind reception amongst a people, to release

their attention to their studies; and fall into a common place mode of preaching, which, if it does not disgust, soon renders their ministry uninteresting to their hearers; but I have reason to hope better things of you. A near walk and converse with God, is that which arms a minister with the greatest power. May you be favoured with these.

Please to accept my best wishes, Yours &c. J. M.

From a young Lady, to a Minister from whose preaching she received spiritual comfort.

W——. April 3d. 1788.

THUS Sir, I have taken the liberty to express to you some of my trials, and darkest hours; now I will take the freedom to inform you of some exercises more pleasing. Very lately as I was contemplating on eternal things, Christ appeared more precious than ever. God's mercies are unfathomable, they endure forever.—Jesus is altogether lovely, the chiefest among ten thousand; in *him* my soul most delighteth. This verse in Dr. Watts's hymns dropped sweetly into my mind—

“Thou whom my soul admires above,
 “All earthly joys, all earthly love;
 “Tell me, dear Shepard, let me know,
 “Where do thy sweetest pastures grow.”

I cannot think of going back into the sinful vanities and pleasures of the world again. I do not see any thing worth setting my affection upon, short of Jesus Christ.—I am much concerned for my fellow youth, who are yet out of the ark of safety: I pity them but cannot help them.

Sir, you will please to excuse the freedom I have taken in writing, and I must beg the favour of an answer.—I hope you will remember me in your prayers. My request to the throne of grace, is, that I may continue to the end, live to God's glory, and not wound

the cause of Christ.*——Sir, you will accept my best wishes for your health, and that you may be successful in the gospel ministry. I am, honoured Sir, with all due respect, yours, &c. P. W.

Another from the same Person.

W——, March 2d, 1790.

Rev. Sir,

I RECEIVED your most welcome letter, by the hand of Mr. D—, and fain would I make you sensible, with what pleasure I perused it; but am unable.—Your letter was very unexpected, therefore the more endearing. Your instruction I prize: hope you will please to write every opportunity; your advice will ever be accepted, as it is ever needed.—You hope I am acquainted with the deceitfulness of my heart: I trust I am in a measure. I find it to be a sink of sin; the seeds of all the ills that grow are therein. I am prone to sin, and sin I shall, while in this world of temptation. I trust however, that I have seen the time, when I had a God to go to for comfort and support, and I believe him to be the same, he changes not:—but I change; and am ready often to call in question, and scruple whether I was ever adopted into God's family. I often ask myself whether I love holiness, *for holiness sake*? Whether I hate sin? I am sensible if ever I am happy, I must be holy. If ever I were redeemed from the guilt, and dominion of sin, I am the least of God's children; and yet, if I know any thing about my heart, I can say as a friend of mine not long since, said, in a letter to me, "If I love not the people of God, and feel not my heart united to those who are determined to stem the torrent of sin, I know not what I love." But my stupidity, my in-

* This pious young lady, in this was indulged; she lived and maintained her religion, until September, 1792, when she died of the Small-pox in Boston.

gratitude ! I am surprized, that I am no more alarmed at it. I fear that this will yield you but little satisfaction. I was at a loss about writing ; but to manifest my filial regard, I have written the genuine exercises of my mind.

“ My soul doth wish mount Zion well,

“ What e’er becomes of me,

“ There my best friends, my kindred dwell,

“ And there I want to be.”

I am with every sentiment of respect, yours, &c.

P. W.

A 3d from the same Person.

March 8, 1794.

Rev. and very dear Sir,

I HAVE not been a little affected at the thought of not seeing you, since you left W——, which is more than three years—yes, three long years since I saw him, whom by the grace of God, I may call my spiritual father ; but I will not repine. Friends I dearly love, but they are not my support. God I trust is my all, it is in *him* I enjoy peace and satisfaction, such as the world does not give, no ; nor can Satan rob me of. The cause of religion I know to be a good one. And oh ! Christ’s love to sinful me. “ Why was I made to hear his voice ? ” Why the vilest of the vile ? The chief of sinners—free grace, unmerited mercy ! God I trust, hath made me willing to bid adieu to all the transitory objects of time, and to suffer affliction with his people. But oh how few returns of love, hath my Redeemer found ! I am ashamed I love him no more, and dedicate myself no more to this best of Masters. I long to be more humble, more holy ; and to have this sinful, proud heart more conformed to God. Shall the happy period come, when sin, our worst enemy before, shall vex our eyes and ears no more ? Jesus is the source of all happiness ; a solid

foundation to build our hopes upon. And though our enemies are strong, and powerful ; yet in and through him, I expect we shall come off conquerors.—I wish you sir, a thousand blessings. Oh ! may I be prepared to meet you in another world, where the thought of parting, or of absence, shall never disturb the feelings of your unworthy child.

P. W.

The author of the Letters from which the following Extracts are made, is a man of liberal education ; but who, until within a few years, has been far from any appearance of, or pretensions to religion. He now resides in the District of Maine, where, we hope he has become a new creature. These Letters were written to a Minister at Newton, whom the author had never seen face to face : but the minister first wrote to him.

September 25, 1793.

Dear S I R,

WHAT a happy circumstance it is to the real friends of the once meek and lowly Jesus, (but who now wears on his vesture and on his thigh, this majestic inscription, King of Kings and Lords of Lords) that neither time nor distance can separate their hearts. The Letter I received from you by Mr.—— afforded me real comfort and satisfaction. I am fully confident the friends of Zion must ever pray and rejoice for and in her prosperity : and to hear of the display of the dear Redeemer's power on any of our fellow mortals can't but afford refreshment to the souls of all, who have themselves once tasted that the Lord is indeed gracious. Oh ! my dear Sir, what great, what astonishing wonders, has the great Jehovah wrought in these (so lately) dark regions of the East ; and all seems to be effected by such means and instruments, that *he that glorieth must indeed glory in the Lord.* Oh !

that we had but hearts to ascribe, and language to express the thousandth part of the glory due to his holy name for the wonders of redeeming love. When the subjects of the all conquering grace of God have exchanged mortality for immortality, they will be then fitted to engage in a more perfect manner in the seraphic theme, and eternity will be just long enough for the noble employ.

“ Had I ten thousand thousand tongues,
His name, his love ; the song of songs ;
Should be my dear employ ;
O for a sweet seraphic flame
To praise my Lord, to sing his name
The life of all my joy.”

As you were pleased to express in your letter a desire of being informed respecting the state of our affairs, it is with pleasure I inform you that a church was embodied in this place on the first Wednesday in August, consisting of twenty one members ; Elders P.—S. and C.—with messengers from their respective churches, assisted on the solemn occasion : some have been added since to this little branch of the church militant, and we have an agreeable prospect of still more ; for the blest Redeemer seems to be still working wonders on the hearts of the children of men, even the rebellious, and many stubborn hearts are brought to bow to the sceptre of King Jesus.—I feel sensible that the whole gospel armour is very necessary for every christian, and that the same Almighty power which was necessary to bring such a miserable, proud, unhumiliated wretch as myself out of darkness into his marvelous light, must be continued or I shall certainly go astray, for such another wretched heart as mine, I believe, was never wrapt in flesh. When it pleased a sovereign God to bring me to a sight and sense of myself, I thought I then had a view of it in all its deformity, but I can now say, as the Queen of Sheba in another case, the half was not shown me.

In another letter dated Dec. 31, 1793, he writes thus.

Dear S I R,

I FIND no truth more frequently verified than this observation of our Saviour, "without me ye can do nothing." And how strange it is, that with the addition of my own experience witnessing to the truth of the above assertion, I should attempt to perform any duty in my own strength: but I know my proud, hard, unbelieving heart needs humbling; and I desire to bless God that he knows it, and I trust will do it. How well might the pen of inspiration declare the heart of man to be deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.—How fondly I pleased myself that the *Canaanites were all driven out of the land*, but alas! they are showing their heads every day: but Jesus is the blessed captain of our salvation: all the crosses and trials we meet with are intended by him to beat down, keep under, and weaken the old man, and strengthen the new, which is created after God in righteousness and true holiness. Oh! what comfort it affords that the seed of the woman shall finally be more than conqueror over all; and I pray that I might every day experience more and more of this conquest in my heart; and that I might daily die to self and sin, and rise more and more into the image of the blessed Jesus. When you are addressing the throne of grace, may you have a petition on your heart for such an unprofitable servant as myself.

In another letter dated June 2, 1794, he writes thus.

My dear Sir,

I THINK I feel both guilty and ashamed that I have two of your letters unanswered, which administered comfort to me at the time of their reception, and often since when I get pretty low, I read them, and the perusal revives my drooping spirits; and others, to whom I have taken the liberty to read them, have had their hearts cheered. But when I consider the vanity,

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darkness and ignorance of my mind ; the perverseness and stubbornness of my will ; with the disorder, irregularity and distemper of my affections with respect to things spiritual and heavenly. I feel ashamed of, nay, I abhor myself. I find in myself a proneness to foolish imagination, and vanities that profit not. I think I can adopt the language of Isaiah the prince of prophets. "I am an unclean thing, and my righteousness as filthy rags, and I fade as a leaf." Did I not find the great apostle of the Gentiles groaning under the burden of indwelling sin; the devout psalmist praying for quickning grace, and those around me in whom I can't but believe is the spirit of Christ, making the same complaint with myself ; I should hardly entertain a hope, that ever I had been savingly wrought upon by the power, spirit and grace of the heavenly physician : but, the greater and more intimate acquaintance I get with the children of God, the more ready I am to say,

"That my song and my complaint,

"Is but the voice of every saint."

I find the christian life to be like the land of Canaan, a land of hills and valleys, which was watered with the dew of heaven ; and I have reason to bless God, that the dew of heavenly grace is sometimes poured into my soul, and oh ! I long to possess a thankful heart, and no longer remain barren and unfruitful in God's vineyard.

The empire of our adorable Redeemer seems to be increasing in this part of the land ; more particularly in this and the neighbouring settlements. Our little Church when embodied last August, consisted of 21 now we are in number fifty, so that you see the blessed Lord of the harvest has been adding unto this branch of Zion (agreeable to our prayers) such as (I trust) have experienced the power of divine grace upon their souls. We seem to enjoy the unity of the spirit, in a wonderful degree, there does not seem to be one discordant, jarring sentiment in the whole : but all appear to be well grounded in the Doctrines of the Gospel, and perfectly united in the faith, order and disci-

pline of God's house ; and oh ! that we might for years to come know experimentally the pleasures resulting from *brethren dwelling together in unity*. Surely we may say (tho in the wilderness) " our lines are fallen to us in a pleasant place, and that we have a goodly heritage." About a month ago ten were baptized and joined the Church in one day, and the last Lord's day in May five more, among whom was an aged woman upwards of 60 years, she was a strict formalist, and a kind neighbour ; but a fall which she received from an horse sometime past, which endangered her life, was the means in the hands of him who sits at the helm of the universe, ruling all things after the council of his own will, of awakening her to a sense of her condition, and showing her how she had fallen from God, and that her nature was opposed and her heart enmity to him. But the blessed Physician not only healed her body, but applied the balm of Gilead to her soul, not only continued her natural life ; but raised her to a new spiritual and divine life. With joy she followed her Redeemer's steps into the watery Grave, and now she goes on her way rejoicing, singing *redeeming love*, and praising free, sovereign grace, for calling her at the eleventh hour, into his vineyard.

I can hardly suppress my desire of enlarging on this delightful theme, but I must stop. I little thought when I began this letter, of extending it to its present length. But oh ! when we meet on Zion's hill, adorned with the righteousness of the dear Redeemer, the blessed theme of redeeming love, will commence never to be interrupted.

We have had various winds of Doctrine presented us ; but, our society have not been much carried about with them. Amongst the variety we have had a Mr. —, a kind of a Wesleyan Methodist, denier of total depravity, final perseverance, predestination, and I can hardly tell what ; tho' some things in him agreeable ; but what he is, I know not ; the searcher of hearts does.

I wish you to write me often and above all to pray for me. May your soul be in health and prosper, and the work of the Lord prosper in your hands, and *Newtown* share in the Redeemer's Grace. I must at present take my leave of you, my *unknown, intimate* friend.

E. W.

THE following serious Address to the clergy by a Minister of the Church of England ; was first published in London, but reprinted at Boston (N. E.) 1756. And as it is worthy to be esteemed and often read, by Ministers of all denominations I have now been at the expence of getting it printed again.

Reverend and dear SIR,

CURIOSITY may excite you just to give the following Pages a cursory View ; but permit me to ask for a serious Moment, when your Thoughts are composed, and you are in no Danger of an Interruption : Then sit down, and read what is here humbly presented to you, give every Article its due Consideration, and may it, through a divine Blessing, prove a happy Opportunity, and be made effectual to answer the great Ends for which it is intended.

You are by profession a Minister—a Leader of the People—a Shepherd in *Israel*—a sacred character indeed ! an honourable employment ! Yet venerable as it is, how many are deplorably insensible of the great importance of their *trust*, are actuated by *mercenary principles*, are ignorant of the most *interesting subjects* of christianity, and are *regardless* of the *souls* committed to their care ! As this is the case with too many who are engaged in the sacred office ; and as the consequences are inexpressibly melancholy both to themselves and the people they preach to, so give me leave to address You, Sir, upon the subject of your Ministry. I would do it with the highest respect to your *character*, with all decency and humility, with an undissembled regard for your best interest, & therefore with all christian free-

dom and faithfulness.—Thus hoping your mind is prepared to attend with candour and seriousness to the few hints that may drop from my feeble, though friendly pen, I take the liberty to ask you the following weighty and momentous questions.

What is the Message you carry to your people ? Many will be ready to receive it without inquiring whether it is agreeable to the word of God or not, because it comes from you. This then should engage you to inquire of what kind it is, and stir you up to take the most diligent care that it be in every respect suitable to the gospel of Christ, and to the circumstances of those amongst whom you labour.—What Doctrines have you been preaching? The generally despised, but *soul-quickening truths* of the adorable Jesus, or the naturally pleasing, but destructive errors of infidelity?—Have you been representing the fall, with its inconceivably awful consequences in the ruin of the whole human race?—Have you been opening the glories of the Everlasting Covenant, and exhibiting the great Mystery of Redemption?—Have you been displaying the excellencies of our EMMANUEL, and propagating, what the deluded world calls, the *foolish and absurd doctrine* of the Cross? Have you been feeding your *immortal hearers* with pure *gospel provision*, and satisfying their souls with the Bread of Life, or starving them with *empty* Declamations, and fine eloquent Harangues upon some Moral Virtue? Have you, in fine, been preaching to *sinners* and to *saints*, been endeavouring to *divide the Word aright*, and to *give to every one his portion in due season*?—I would beg leave to suggest to you the following examination :—“ Come, my soul, let me enter
 “ upon a most necessary and important scrutiny. I
 “ have professed myself a Minister of Christ these many
 “ years, but have I ever inquired into the Message
 “ I have carried to the people? Have I carefully considered the Doctrines I have preach’d? Have I ever
 “ yet seriously asked the question, whether it is Truth
 “ or error I am sounding from the Pulpit! Have I not

“ been contented with a mere *round of preaching*, and
 “ never been concerned to inquire what I have enter-
 “ tained my congregation with? And, if so, is it not
 “ time to awake out of my security, and *examine* into
 “ that, upon which so much depends? What, what
 “ are the Principles I have been inculcating? the
 “ Foundation I have been laying, and the Superstruct-
 “ ure I have been building upon it: Inquire, inquire
 “ my soul, before the returning sabbath, lest I should
 “ be at best *famishing*, instead of feeding, those that
 “ hear me.—Again,

What ends have you had in view in your ministry?
 What was it that prevailed upon you to enter into *holy orders*? Were you really moved by the Holy Ghost * to take upon you the solemn charge, and undertake the cure of souls? or was it a desire of popular applause, a thirst for honour, or a hope of worldly gain? Did you think it an easy way of getting a Subsistence, of *providing* for a family, and of living with *reputation*? Have these been your great *springs of action*, or have you had the *glory of God*, the *honour of Christ*, and the *salvation of immortal souls* in view? Has this been all your aim, and is it for this you desire to *live to preach* the everlasting gospel? Have you been concerned to attend to the various important *parts of your ministry*? As you are set for the defence of the *gospel*, have you endeavoured to vindicate, and maintain, and set in a proper light, its glorious doctrines? Have you laboured after the conversion of *sinners*? Have you administered comfort to *God's people*? Have you *preach'd the gospel to the poor*, attempted to *bind up the broken-hearted*, *proclaimed deliverance to the captives*, and the *acceptable Year of the Lord*? Have you done this from the *pulpit*? Has it been the end you have been aiming at in private conversation? Have you *visited* your Flock, the poor as well as the rich, the Afflicted, the Dying?

* The first question in the ordination of deacons, A question which you have already answered, God grant you may not have trifled with him in so solemn an affair, in declaring the Holy Ghost moved you, when some worldly prospect was the Motive!—

Of what kind have your visits been, and with what views? To gratify a sensual appetite, to spend an hour in unprofitable discourse, or to reprove, exhort, comfort, as you saw occasion?—These, Sir, are important heads of Inquiry.—Again,

In what manner have you attended to the great ends of your ministry? How has it been, and how is it still with you in the *pulpit*? Have you been lifting up your voice like a trumpet, and have you addressed all sorts of sinners, represented to them the dreadful condition they are in, warned them of approaching judgments, pressed them to seek after an interest in the Redeemer, expostulated with, and besought them, with all the tenderness and affection of a *minister* of Christ, to attend to the things that belong to their peace, before they are forever hid from their eyes? Or have you gone through the work of the day in a cold, lifeless manner, esteeming it rather a burthen than a pleasure, and having little concern upon your mind for the souls of those that heard you? How has it been with you in the *study*? Have you there made conscience of solemn prayer? Have you carried your people daily to the throne of grace, wrestled with God for them, wept over sinners, and committed them to the infinite compassion of the great shepherd? Have you been importunate with God for *strength* to enable you to go on in your work with growing pleasure—for *direction*, in the choice of suitable subjects—for the divine *presence* with you in your public work—for *wisdom* to conduct your conversation aright—for *courage* and *faithfulness*—for a lively *Zeal*—for a growing love to Christ and souls, and in fine, for a glorious and divine *power* to accompany the whole of your labours, that they may be made effectual to the salvation of every one who hears you? How is it in *conversation*? Have you been recommending Christ, his gospel, and his service, with affection to those around you? Have you been ready, according to your character, to begin and incourage the most important subjects of conversation? Have you been willing to remove

doubts, to strengthen the weak, to satisfy inquirers, and to attend to the Requests of those who have desired your advice and instruction? In fine, have you been lively, serious, and warm for your *master's glory*, been concerned to spread the knowledge of his gospel, and to advance his kingdom and interest wherever you were called?—Let me go farther, dear Sir, and ask you—

What has been your example? Have you been concerned to live in the discharge of those *duties* to which you have exhorted your people? Have you guarded against those *sins*, of which you have warned them, and from which you have endeavoured to dissuade them? Have you been sober in your behavior, moderate in the use of your enjoyments, and regular, uniform, and heavenly in your conversation? Upon the whole, has it been your great concern to walk in the steps of our dearest Lord, to have the same *temper* that was in him, and in the whole of your conduct to show the Christian and the Minister?—These, Sir, are *questions* peculiarly suited to your work and character; *questions* which I am persuaded you must acknowledge the great importance of, and the reasonableness, necessity, and advantage of seriously attending to. How happy should I be, could I persuade you to enter your study, and in the most solemn manner, and as under the all-seeing eye of God, take them one by one, and put closely to your own soul! †

Thus I have endeavoured, with all faithfulness, to point out some of the important branches of your *ministerial work*, and the manner in which you should attend to it. What shall I now say to press you duly to consider it, and to excite you to a diligent discharge of those duties you are called to? Methinks, Sir, you should not want the least argument to stir you up to the greatest activity and zeal in so delightful, so honourable

† They are all questions built upon, and what may be justly extracted from the ordination service relating to Deacons and Priests, and which you have brought yourself under the most solemn engagements to attend to; therefore you must be convinced of the propriety of my putting them to you in this address, and of the real love and concern I have for your soul herein.

honourable, so important an employment. You believe the scripture to be the word of God, I make no doubt. You must therefore be convinced, that religion is no farce, no human invention, but a divine institution ; and does it not therefore require all your regard, especially as providence has placed you in the Character of a teacher of others ? Fain, fain would I move you, melt you, convince and quicken you ! I can but attempt it, it is God who must open your eyes, and fasten the conviction upon your mind. In hopes of this I would cheerfully cast in my mite, and offer to your consideration the following things ; accompanying them with an hearty prayer, that they may answer some saving purpose to your soul ; and earnestly intreating that you would not stop here, and read no farther, but view the whole, carefully examine every hint as to its truth and importance, and weigh all in the ballances of reason and Scripture.

The first thing I would mention is, your people have immortal souls. And have you no tenderness for them ? Can you look upon them with as little regard as you do upon your *Horse* or your *Dog* ; are they not tending to eternity as quick as the wings of time can carry them, and can you neglect them ? Are they not directing their course towards the *heavenly World*, or the dark regions of *Hell*, and is it indifferent to you to which it is they are moving ? What, be altogether unaffected with such a thought ! Are some of them swearers, others drunkards ; are some breaking the sabbath, and others running into all manner of excess of riot, and will you, can you see all this, and sit as an unconcerned spectator ? Have you no zeal for your Master ? Can you see the snare laid, souls entangled, and hurried by the great adversary to his dark habitations, and not endeavour to prevent it, or find the least pity in your breast for them ? Will you not warn them of their danger, call loudly upon them to awake ? Will you not tell them that *Eternity* is near, lead them to the mouth of the bottomless pit, and shew them the terrors

of the second death ? Will you not try to win them, to allure them by the glories of immortality, or melt them by the love, the amazing love of the Son of God ; What (for I cannot leave off, I must pursue so important a subject) are there any, are there many of your congregation, who are absolutely stupid, hurrying on to everlasting destruction, and will you not try to rouse and awaken them ? Will you not beseech them by the mercies of God ? Will you not intreat them in Christ's stead to be reconciled unto God ? Will you not exhibit all the riches of his grace, all the glories of the great Emmanuel, and all the blessings of a salvation so dearly purchased, to move and engage them to repentance and new obedience ? Was one of your brute domesticks to be in a languishing condition, your tender heart would feel some pity for the poor animal : and can you sit still and see precious souls perishing, souls of more worth than all the world, shall they sink in endless ruin, and you not drop one single tear ? What, their minister not take one step to lead them to Christ, to escape the wrath to come, sure it cannot be !—But if negligent as to the means to awaken them, sure you cannot take those means that tend to harden them ! You cannot be a companion with them in drunkenness, and revel with them in their scenes of criminal pleasure : You cannot sit with them in public view at the card-table or lead a dance at a ball or an assembly ! Is it possible ! You, sir, well know how the matter stands. Consider, consider your people have souls. And further—

Remember, these souls are in the course of divine Providence committed to your care—you have professedly taken the charge, the oversight of them, and bro't yourself under engagements to inspect their conduct, and to do all you can to lead them into the knowledge of the gospel, to promote their spiritual advantage, to walk before them in all the duties of the christian life, to encourage them in their pursuits of the better world, to pity and sympathize with them under all their difficulties, to bear them upon your heart, and to seek not *theirs* but *them*.—God, by his providence in opening

a way for your coming amongst this people, has called you to all this work. How then will you fulfil your engagements, how perform your promises, how answer your character, if you are negligent?—Do you discharge that trust, God has committed to you? So many precious souls; some to rouse, to awaken, others to encourage, and comfort; some to call in, others to build up; sure, 'tis an important charge! So many to be taught and instructed! and instead of attending to your duty, are you at places of diversion, squandering your time in company, and drinking towards the bounds of excess? Are you taken up in useless friendships and unprofitable visits, or trifling away life in ease and sloth, doing nothing? Instead of talking to them of Jesus and salvation, and recommending the great duties of self-examination, mortification, meditation, &c. are you amusing them with empty speculations? Instead of calling them into a serious inquiry into the foundation of their hopes of eternal life, are you bolstering them up with the expectations of heaven, and lulling them into a pleasing but dangerous security? Instead of cherishing their convictions, and encouraging them in their small beginnings, are you endeavouring to darken these dawnings of grace, to laugh them out of all religion, and to discourage them in the pursuits of salvation?—They have committed their souls to your care. Precious as they are, they have trusted you with them, look to you for instruction, and from you expect all suitable direction and assistance in their way to a better world. See what confidence they have reposed in you, and should not this make you diligent? Can you be unfaithful! What, they lodged so great a trust with you, and you, so careless! The greater their dependance upon you, the more should you be concerned to seek their everlasting good, and direct them in the way to happiness. But,

Lastly consider the certainty and Solemnity of a day of accounts. That you expect to be called before the Judge of all the earth, to be tried, examined, and lodged in a world of joy or sorrow, I would not call in question. If you believe not, if you expect not these things, or if you think religion a vain and trifling thing, why are you a Minister?

why appear in that sacred character? why preach and pray? Do you never think upon the awful day, when you must give an account of your stewardship, when your congregation will appear either as swift witnesses against you, or testify to your faithfulness! Do you never consider the impartiality of the Judge, the strictness of the trial, with the certain and most important consequences? Jesus, who will be the Judge, knows all you have done. He has all your negligence, your carelessness, your unfaithfulness, &c. wrote down in his Book: All the principles and springs from whence you have acted, all your ends and views are minutely noticed by him.—Think, my dear Sir, think upon the day, how solemn!—The vast, the numerous assembly gathered, and you hear your name called upon; you summoned to stand forth, give an account, and receive your sentence! Critical moment, moment big with importance indeed! Now what pleasure to have the approbation of the Judge, to see a smile upon his countenance, and to hear him saying, come, thou faithful servant, thou hast been faithful in declaring my Gospel, and promoting my cause, come *enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord!* How great the happiness, to have many to appear as your Joy and crown of rejoicing in that day!—But to see the Judge with an awful frown, and to hear his voice, more terrible than thunder, saying, thou slothful and unprofitable servant, thou hast had the care of souls, but hast been negligent, and not attended to thy important charge; thou hast suffered them to go on from one act of rebellion to another, and to perish for ever, without warning them of the danger, and pressing them to flee from it; depart therefore, thou cursed creature, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels. Worldly gain was all thy view: popularity was all thy ambition: these thou hast had, and now sorrow, distressing sorrow shall fill thy soul, and thy name, however applauded by fellow-mortals, shall rot for ever.—Painful Thought! To have the weight of so many souls lying upon you, souls you have neglected! Methinks I hear one upbraiding your negligence; and saying, had it not been for you, I perhaps had not perished, I trusted you with my soul, but you never corrected my profaneness; you never pressed me to seek after salvation; you led me into sin, and kept me in destructive ignorance!—Hark, another lifting up his sorrowful head, and saying, I was under convictions, and upon the inquiry what I should do to be saved, but you discouraged me in my pursuits of Heaven; you told me all would be well, if I attended but on Sundays at Church: thus, through your influence, I sunk into a lethargy, took up with the form, and stopt short of the power of religion, and now am ruin'd for ever!—Distressing scene! To have one after another rise up, and thus upbraid you! To have their blood required at your hands! Every reflection will wound your soul, and pierce you through with inexpressible, everlasting sorrows.

Thus, my dear Reverend reader, I have endeavoured to drop a few hints; hints of the greatest importance, as they relate to the peace of your own soul, the success of your ministry, and the manner of your last appearance. I hope you will take kindly this little attempt. 'Tis your own master's cause I am pleading. 'Tis your own comfort I am seeking, as well as that of your people. Do not be curious in inquiring about the author: he wants no praise: And hopes he is regardless of all the reproach that may be cast upon him. If his name stands but recorded in the annals of eternity, and he can be instrumental in promoting his Redeemer's interest, 'tis all he desires.

